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ENGLISH POETRY

FOR

INDIAN STUDENTS

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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PREFACE.

This little book of English verse is prepared for the use of Indian students. The Editors, Rai Bahadur Lalitmohan, Chatterjee and myself, have had considerable experience in the teaching of English in Indian colleges, and in my own case that experience has been by no means confined to work in the colleges connected with the Calcutta and Dacca Universities. What we have tried to do is to interest the student as well as to shew him what good poetry really is,—and, in the introduction, how to study it. Unless the student enjoys his work, the teacher labours in vain. Hence we have chosen various kinds of verse, each passage selected having its own lesson and, we hope, its own charm. My colleague has edited that section of the book, beginning with Wordsworth's poems, which includes the poetry of our own day, or nearly so, the poetry of the Romantic Movement and of the various later movements to which it has given birth. He has not, it is true, included specimens of some of the latest modes of poetic expression, the *vers libre* for example, for the simple reason that they would not be such as an Indian student, or even such as an English student, at the stage we have in view, would understand or appreciate. Still he has given the student some insight into the melody and power of modern English poetry. And I hope that the reading of the selection in class under the guidance of an intelligent and sympathetic teacher, may induce the student to prolong his studies for their own sake and enlarge his knowledge of the vast field of modern English poetry.

With regard to the passages belonging to an earlier age, which it has fallen to my lot to select and annotate, I can

only ask the student to think for himself. I remember the delight with which my own grandfather, who in his boyhood heard the news of the Battle of Waterloo, used to declaim his favourite lines from Pope, and the influence which the sonorous verse of Dr. Johnson exercised on a generation that has passed away. And if students do not feel attracted towards the classical poets of the eighteenth century, they can turn to the Elizabethans, and find there the passion and at the same time the simplicity and truth of which the poetry of Wordsworth and Coleridge and Shelley and Keats was in a very real sense a revival.

Students are often repelled by the somewhat archaic and, shall we say, pedagogic form of what they are given to study. The portals of English literature are made too gloomy and forbidding. The result is that the reading of verse begins and ends by being a task, when it ought to be a delightful recreation. If we have to any extent helped to bring before the Indian student that enchantment which lies in English poetry, if we have been able to take him far away from the daily round of his often somewhat monotonous life, we shall be more than rewarded. Our thoughts too have often been with his teachers; they pursue their task amid much discouragement and with but small chance of recognition. But theirs is a great and noble task, and just as the India that we see before us is to all practical intents and purposes their creation, so the greater India, the country into which we are all about to look, will be that to which they have supplied the inspiration and the ideals.

W. A. J. ARCHBOLD.

INTRODUCTION.

Poetry deals with human experience, with the very stuff of which man's earthly life is made. The student will find many illustrations of this in the passages here selected. Thus Swinburne's poem *A Child's Laughter* brings home to us the sunny joyousness of childhood, while Patmore's poem *The Toys* touches on the pathos of a child's helpless grief. Browning in his *Incident of the French Camp* vividly presents the heroic pride of boyhood verging on youth. Very different is Wordsworth's *There was a Boy* in which we see a boy touched into sudden awe by the solemn influences of Nature and feeling that communion 'with rocks and stones and trees' of which the author teaches us so much. Many of the poems deal with youth. In Milton's *Il Penseroso* we meet the scholarly young man in a musing mood, while in Shakespeare's famous soliloquy "*To be or not to be*" put into the mouth of Hamlet we see the young philosopher faced with the perplexing problems of life. The sense of work unaccomplished which so often comes to the gifted young man finds expression in Milton's sonnet, *How soon hath Time*, and more sadly in Keats's wonderful lines, *When I have fears*. In Matthew Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum* we have a moving presentation of a heroic youth's love for a father whom he has never known and at whose hands at last he meets with a tragic death. In Rupert Brooke's sonnet, *The Soldier*, the young poet expresses his tender attachment to his homeland of which he gave such noble proof in the Great War. While the romance that attends on womanhood finds charming

expression in several of the poems, the feelings, the sentiments, the interests, and the experiences of manhood form the subject matter of others: for example, the greatness of man's task, in Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*; concern for the homeland, in his sonnet *Written in London, September, 1802*; valour and the facing of danger in King Henry's stirring speech in the extract from Shakespeare's *King Henry V*, and, more briefly, in Cunningham's *A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea*, and, still more briefly, in Scott's rousing lines *Sound, sound the clarion*. Contrast with these the scholar's choice in Southey's quiet lines, *The Scholar*, and the serene spirit that breathes through Sir Henry Wotton's poem, *The Character of a Happy Life*. Other poems again, such as Clough's *Say not the struggle nought availeth*, deal with that struggle against adverse circumstances which is the hardest test of manhood. External Nature, with its mystery and beauty, which forms the environment of man's life, enters in many ways into his deepest experience and several poems deal with that. A crowded city like London has also its attraction and, strangely enough, an Indian poet gives fitting expression to it (Monmohan Ghose's *London*). History, Art and Religion have also been touched upon, the wisdom of age and, last not least, the meeting of death.

From this survey it will be seen that the subject matter of poetry is the variety of human experience. In this close touch with life lies the great value of poetry for man and no doubt this is what Matthew Arnold had in mind when he spoke of poetry as a 'criticism of life.'

Yet the characters and incidents, the scenes and situations that we find in poetry are generally fictitious. For, unlike History, the truth that poetry presents is not the truth of fact but the truth of ideas of which

facts only give the hint. The 'incident in the French camp' may never have taken place but the touch of heroic pride which belongs to noble boyhood has been pictured to the life. Whether any Ulysses went on the voyage as the poet tells us or not, it is true that the spirit of adventure has its hold on some men to the last. Arthur belongs to the romantic region of legend rather than to that of history but a great leader may, at his departure, well think the thoughts to which Arthur gives expression. Ophelia did not exist but the gentleness and docility of her character as well as her womanly insight are within our experience.

Poetry differs from Philosophy in presenting the truth of human experience not in the abstract but in the concrete, through images and stories. Poetry, as Milton said, should be 'simple, sensuous, and impassioned.' The poet wants to tell us of man's love for animals and he does so most impressively by telling the story of Muléykch. Or the poet wants to teach us how man's heartless cruelty to woman may lead to tragic results and he does so by feelingly presenting the incident of the *Bridge of Sighs*. Even the abstract subject of Duty is presented through images in Wordsworth's *Ode*.

But in presenting his subject the poet relates it to man's sense of the rightness of things, or the beauty of things, or the mystery of things, or perhaps the humour of things. As the subject appeals to his own mind so he presents it to us. Thus we see things in their meaning and significance for us. The poet in a way interprets what he presents. The poet's eye therefore gathers a richer harvest of truth than the eyes of ordinary people. Sometimes, as generally in Lyric Poetry, the poet's emotion occasioned by what he has seen is the main subject of the poem.

In this power of interpretation or vivid presentation the poet is helped by a kind of divine insight into the beauty and mystery of things. This insight is called imagination. A scientific study of daffodils, for example may enable the botanist to tell us of the shape of the flower, of its characteristics and its laws of growth ; but the poet in the *Daffodils* brings home to us the beauty and careless happy charm of the flower which appeal to us most strongly and which form not less the truth about the flower than what the scientist has to tell us.

Indeed the poet invests with freshness and charm ordinary things and ordinary persons, and this is perhaps what we mean by romance. Custom often blinds us to their beauty and we do not see it till the poet has awakened our wondering interest again. One may have often heard the song of the nightingale but after one has read Keats's poem, *Ode to a Nightingale*, it becomes a thing of wonder. It is said that it is not an uncommon thing in the Scottish Highlands to meet a girl reaping alone and singing to herself. But it was Wordsworth who found it full of romantic interest. (*The Solitary Reaper*).

Sometimes, however, the imagination pleases itself by inventing scenes and situations remote from ordinary experience which interest us by their strangeness or thrill us by their supernatural associations, as in Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*.

Among the passages collected in this book there will be found some, such as those of Dryden, Pope, Johnson, to which many of the things said above do not seem to apply. These poets belong to an age of prose when the spirit of poetry and the play of imagination were somewhat frozen. It is after such periods that men's minds seek to escape from the restraints of the prosaic and the con-

ventional, and romantic poetry is born. Gray and Cowper represent the transition; Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, the full tide of romance.

We may now say something about the form and manner of poetic utterance. The poet may speak in his own person about himself, as in *The Scholar*; or he may speak in vivid narrative, as in *There was a Boy*, or *The Last Minstrel*; or he may himself disappear and just set a scene and actors before us, as in the Drama; or he may present one person of a scene and, by a dramatic monologue put into the mouth of that person, briefly and intensively give us at the same time scene, character and situation, as in *The Lost Leader* or *The Laboratory*.

Further, all poetry must have a complete form, must be symmetrical. And the language of poetry must not only perfectly agree with the form chosen but must itself be beautiful. The language may be beautiful by its golden simplicity and inevitableness, as in Wordsworth's *She dwelt among the untrodden ways* or *The Highland Reaper*; or it may be beautiful by its suggestiveness, its pictorial effect, its felicity of phrasing, as often in the poetry of Shakespeare, Milton, Keats, Tennyson. As examples of the latter may be quoted. "the *primrose path* of dalliance," "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," "monumental oak," "dewy-feathered sleep," "the moon *stooping* through a fleecy cloud," "fairy lands *forlorn*," "beaded bubbles *winking* at the brim," "a dying King laid *widow'd* of the power in the eye," "from spur to plume a *star* of tournament."

Nor has the language of poetry merely the distinction of beautiful imagery it has also the beauty of harmonious sound. This is sometimes felt in the slow or quick, smooth or purposely jerky, movement given to a line by

the selection of long or short or rapidly changed vowels, that is in the rhythm of the line, for example :

‘So strode he back slow to the wounded King’
‘By zig-zag paths and juts of pointed rock
Came to the shining levels of the lake’—

each line representing the manner of Sir Bedivere’s movement and even the character of his thoughts.

The effect of selecting suitable consonants is also sometimes remarkable, as in “verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways,” “the murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves,”

“Juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden lo ! the level lake
And the long glories of the winter moon”.

But often, as in Shakespeare, Milton and Keats, the effect of harmony can be felt but is too subtle to be analysed.

L. M. CHATTERJEE.

ENGLISH POETRY

FOR INDIAN STUDENTS

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

FROM ACT III. SCENE II.

Ant. Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears ;

I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.

The evil, that men do, lives after them ;

The good is oft interred with their bones ,

So let it be with Cæsar. The noble Brutus

5

Hath told you, Cæsar was ambitious :

If it were so, it was a grievous fault ;

And grievously hath Cæsar answer'd it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest,

(For Brutus is an honourable man ;

10

So are they all, all honourable men ;)

Come I to speak in Cæsar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me :

But Brutus says, he was ambitious ;

And Brutus is an honourable man.

35

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
 Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill :
 Did this in Cæsar seem ambitious?
 When that the poor have cried, Cæsar' hath wept :
 Ambition should be made of sterner stuff : 20
 Yet Brutus says, he was ambitious ;
 And Brutus is an honourable man.
 You all did see, that on the Lupercal,
 I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
 Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition ? 25
 Yet Brutus says, he was ambitious ;
 And, sure, he is an honourable man.
 I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
 But here I am to speak what I do know.
 You all did love him once, not without cause ; 30
 What cause withholds you then to mourn for him ?
 O judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts,
 And men have lost their reason !—Bear with me ;
 My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar,
 And I must pause till it come back to me. 35

First Cit. Methinks, there is much reason in his sayings.

Second Cit. If thou consider rightly of the matter, Cæsar has had great wrong.

Third Cit. Has he, masters ?
 I fear, there will a worse come in his place.

Fourth Cit. Mark'd ye his words ? He would not take the crown ; 40

Therefore, 'tis certain, he was not ambitious.

First Cit. If it be found so, some will dear abide it.

Second Cit. Poor soul ! his eyes are red as fire with weeping.

Third Cit. There's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony.

Fourth Cit. Now mark him, he begins again to speak. 45

Ant. But yesterday, the word of Cæsar might
Have stood against the world ; now lies he there,
And none so poor to do him reverence.
O masters ! if I were dispos'd to stir
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage, 50
I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,
Who, you all know, are honourable men :
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself, and you,
Than I will wrong such honourable men. 55
But here's a parchment, with the seal of Cæsar,
I found it in his closet, 'tis his will :
Let but the commons hear this testament,
(Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,)
And they would go and kiss dead Cæsar's wounds, 60
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood ;
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And, dying, mention it within their wills,
Bequeathing it, as a rich legacy,
Unto their issue. 65

Fourth Cit. We'll hear the will : Read it, Mark
Antony.

Citizens. The will, the will ; we will hear Cæsar's
will.

Ant. Have patience, gentle friends, I must not read
it ;

It is not meet you know how Cæsar lov'd you.
You are not wood, you are not stones, but men ; 70
And, being men, hearing the will of Cæsar,
It will inflame you, it will make you mad :
'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs ;
For if you should, O, what would come of it !

Fourth Cit. Read the will ; we will hear it Antony ; 75
You shall read us the will ; Cæsar's will.

Ant. Will you be patient ? Will you stay a while ?
I have o'ershot myself, to tell you of it.

I fear, I wrong the honourable men,
Whose daggers^a have stabb'd Cæsar : I do fear it. 80

Fourth Cit. They were traitors : honourable men !

Citizens. The will ! the testament !

Second Cit. They were villains, murderers : The
will ! read the will !

Ant. You will compel me then to read the will ?
Then make a ring about the corpse of Cæsar, 85
And let me show you him that made the will.
Shall I descend ? And will you give me leave ?

Citizens. Come down.

Second Cit. Descend.

[*He comes down from the Pulpit*

Third Cit. You shall have leave. 90

Fourth Cit. A ring ; stand round.

First Cit. Stand from the hearse, stand from the
body.

Second Cit. Room for Antony ;--most noble Antony.

Ant. Nay, press not so upon me ; stand far off.

Citizens. Stand back ! room ! bear back ! 95

Ant. If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.
You all do know this mantle : I remember

The first time ever Cæsar put it on ;

'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent ;

That day he overcame the Nervii : — 100

Look ! in this place, ran Cassius' dagger through ;

See, what a rent the envious Casca made :

Through this, the well-beloved Brutus stabb'd ;

And, as he pluck'd his cursed steel away,

Mark how the blood of Cæsar follow'd it ; 105

As rushing out of doors, to be resolv'd
 If Brutus so unkindly knock'd, or no;
 For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel;
 Judge, O you Gods, how dearly Cæsar lov'd him!
 This was the most unkindest cut of all: 110

For when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,
 Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
 Quite vanquish'd him: then burst his mighty heart;
 And, in his mantle muffling up his face,
 Even at the base of Pompey's statua, 115
 Which all the while ran blood, great Cæsar fell.

O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
 Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,
 Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us.
 O, now you weep; and, I perceive, you feel 120
 The dint of pity: these are gracious drops.
 Kind souls, what, weep you, when you but behold
 Our Cæsar's vesture wounded? Look you here,
 Here is himself, marr'd, as you see, with traitors.

First Cit. O piteous spectacle! 125

Second Cit. O noble Cæsar!

Third Cit. O woful day!

Fourth Cit. O traitors, villains!

First Cit. O most bloody sight!

Second Cit. We will be revenged. 130

Citizens. Revenge;—about,—seek,—burn,—fire,—
 kill,—slay!

Let not a traitor live.

Ant. Stay, countrymen.

First Cit. Peace there:—hear the noble Antony.

Second Cit. We'll hear him, we'll follow him, will
 die with him. 135

Ant. Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir
 you up

'To such a sudden flood of mutiny.
 They, that have done this deed, are honourable ;
 What private griefs they have, alas, I know not,
 That made them do it ; they are wise and honourable, 140
 And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.
 I come not friends, to steal away your hearts ;
 I am no orator, as Brutus is :
 But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,
 That love my friend ; and that they know full well 145
 That gave me public leave to speak of him.
 For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
 Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,
 To stir men's blood : I only speak right on ;
 I tell you that, which you yourselves do know ; 150
 Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds, poor, poor dumb
 mouths,
 And bid them speak for me : But were I Brutus,
 And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
 Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
 In every wound of Cæsar, that should move 155
 The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.
Citizens. We'll mutiny.
First Cit. We'll burn the house of Brutus.
Third Cit. Away, then, come, and seek the cons-
 pirators.
Ant. Yet hear me, countrymen ; yet hear me speak. 160
Citizens. Peace ho ! Hear Antony, most noble
 Antony.
Ant. Why, friends, you go to do you know not what :
 Wherein hath Cæsar thus deserved your loves ?
 Alas, you know not :—I must tell you then :—
 You have forgot the will I told you of. 165
Citizens. Most true :—the will ;—let's stay, and hear
 the will

Ant. Here is the will, and under Cæsar's seal
To every Roman citizen he gives,
To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.

Second Cit. Most noble Cæsar !—We'll revenge his
death. 170

Third Cit. O royal Cæsar !

Ant. Hear me with patience.

Citizens. Peace, ho !

Ant. Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,
His private arbours, and new planted orchards, 175
On this side Tiber ; he hath left them you,
And to your heirs for ever ; common pleasures,
To walk abroad and recreate yourselves.
Here was a Cæsar : when comes such another ?

First Cit. Never, never :—Come, away, away : 180
We'll burn his body in the holy place,
And with the brands fire the traitors' houses.
Take up the body.

Second Cit. Go, fetch fire.

Third Cit. Pluck down benches. 185

Fourth Cit. Pluck down forms, windows, anything.

[*Exeunt citizens with the Body.*]

Ant. Now let it work : mischief thou art afoot,
Take thou what course thou wilt !

HAMLET.

ACT I. SCENE III.

Laertes. My necessities are embarked :¹ farewell :
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Ophelia. Do you doubt² that ?

Laertes. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour, 5
 Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
 A violet in the youth of primy nature,
 Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
 The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
 No more.

Ophelia. No more, but so?

Laertes. Think it no more: 10
 For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
 In thews, and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
 The inward service of the mind and soul
 Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now;
 And now no soil, nor cautel, doth besmirch 15
 The virtue of his will: but, you must fear,
 His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
 For he himself is subject to his birth:
 He may not, as unvalued persons do,
 Carve for himself; for on his choice depends 20
 The safety and the health of this whole state;
 And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body
 Whereof he is the head: Then if he says he loves you,
 It fits your wisdom so far to believe it, 25
 As he in his particular act and place
 May give his saying deed; which is no further,
 Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
 Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
 If with too credent ear you list his songs; 30
 Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure open
 To his unmaster'd importunity.
 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire. 35
 The chariest maid is prodigal enough,

If she unmask her beauty to the moon :
 Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes :
 The canker galls the infants of the spring,
 Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd ; 40
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
 Contagious blastments are most imminent. ,
 Be wary then : best safety lies in fear ;
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Ophelia. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep, 45
 As watchman to my heart : But, good my brother,
 Do not as some ungracious pastors do,
 Shew me the steep and thorny way to heaven ;
 Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads 50
 And recks not his own rede.

Laertes. O fear me not.
 I stay too long ;—But here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace ;
 Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Polonius. Yet here, Laertes ! aboard, aboard, for
 shame ; 55
 The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
 And you are stay'd for : There,—my blessing with you ;

[*Laying his hand on Laertes' head*

And these few precepts in thy memory
 Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
 Nor any unproportion'd thought his act. 60
 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
 The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel ;
 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment

Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware 65
 Of entrance to a quarrel : but, being in,
 Bear it, that the opposed may beware of thee.
 Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice :
 Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, 70
 But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy :
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
 And they in France, of the best rank and station,
 Are of a most select and generous chief in that.
 Neither a borrower nor a lender be : 75
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
 This above all,—To thine ownself be true;
 And it must follow, as the night the day,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man. 80
 Farewell ; my blessing season this in thee !

Laertes. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Polonius. The time invites you ; go, your servants
 tend.

Laertes. Farewell, Ophelia ; and remember well
 What I have said to you.

Ophelia. 'Tis in my memory lock'd, 85
 And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laertes. Farewell. [*Exit Laertes.*]

Polonius. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you ?

Ophelia. So please you, something touching the
 Lord Hamlet.

Polonius. Marry, well bethought : 90
 'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
 Given private time to you ; and you yourself
 Have of your audience been most free and bounteous :
 If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me
 And that in way of caution,) I must tell you, 95

You do not understand yourself so clearly,
 As it behoves my daughter, and your honour :
 What is between you? Give me up the truth.

Ophelia. He hath, my Lord, of late, made many
 tenders

Of his affection to me. 100

Polonius. Affection? Puh! You speak like a green
 girl,

Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Ophelia. I do not know, my Lord, what I should
 think.

Polonius. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a
 baby ; 105

That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
 Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly ;
 Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
 Wronging it thus) you'll tender me a fool.

Ophelia. My Lord, he hath importuned me with love, 110
 In honourable fashion.

Polonius. Ay, fashion you may call it ; go to, go to.

Ophelia. And hath given countenance to his speech,
 my Lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Polonius. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do
 know, 115

When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
 Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
 Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
 Even in their promise, as it is a-making,—

You must not take for fire. From this time, 120
 Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
 Set your intreatments at a higher rate,

Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,

Believe so much in him, that he is young ;
 And with a larger tether may he walk, 125
 Than may be given you : In few, Ophelia,
 Do not believe his vows : for they are brokers
 Not of that dye which their investments show,
 But mere imp'orators of unholy suits,
 Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds, 130
 The better to beguile. This is for all,—
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
 As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
 Look to't, I charge you ; come your ways. 135
Ophelia. I shall obey, my Lord.

[*Exeunt.*

HAMLET.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Hamlet. To be, or not to be, that is the question :—
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune ;
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
 And, by opposing, end them?—To die,—to sleep,— 5
 No more ;—and, by a sleep, to say we end
 The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
 That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die ;—to sleep ;—
 To sleep ! perchance to dream ; ay, there's the rub ; 10
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause : There's the respect,
 That makes calamity of so long life :
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time, 15

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make 20
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life;
But that the dread of something after death,—
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns,—puzzles the will : 25
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought ; 30
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

KING HENRY V.

ACT III. SCENE I.

King Henry. Once more into the breach, dear
friends, once more ;
Or close the wall up with our English dead ?
In peace, there's nothing so becomes a man,
As modest stillness, and humility :
But when the blast of war blows in our ears, 5
Then imitate the action of the tiger ;

Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage :
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect :
Let it pry through the portage of the head, 10
Like the brass cannon ; let the brow o'erwhelm it,
And fearfully, as doth a galled rock
O'erhang and jutty his confounded base,
Swill'd with the wild and wasteful ocean.
Now set the teeth, and stretch the nostril wide ; 15
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
To his full height !—On, on, you noblest English,
Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof !
Fathers, that, like so many Alexanders,
Have, in these parts, from morn till even fought, 20
And sheath'd their swords for lack of argument,
Dishonour not your mothers ; now attest,
That those, whom you call'd fathers, did beget you !
Be copy now to men of grosser blood,
And teach them how to war !—And you, good yeomen, 25
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
The mettle of your pasture ; let us swear
That you are worth your breeding : which I doubt not ;
For there is none of you so mean and base,
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes. 30
I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start. The game's afoot ;
Follow your spirit : and, upon this charge,
Cry—God for Harry! England! and saint George!

KING RICHARD III.

ACT I. SCENE IV.

London—A room in the Tower.

Enter CLARENCE and BRAKENBURY.

Brakenbury. Why looks your grace so heavily
to-day?

Clarence. O, I have pass'd a miserable night,
So full of fearful dreams, of ugly sights,
That, as I am a Christian faithful man,
I would not spend another such a night, 5
Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days;
So full of dismal terror was the time.

Brakenbury. What was your dream, my Lord? I
pray you tell me.

Clarence. Methought, that I had broken from the
Tower,

And was embark'd to cross to Burgundy; 10

And, in my company, my brother Gloucester:

Who from my cabin tempted me to walk

Upon the hatches; thence we look'd toward England,

And cited up a thousand heavy times,

During the wars of York and Lancaster 15

That had befall'n us. As we pac'd along

Upon the giddy footing of the hatches,

Methought that Gloucester stumbled; and, in falling

Struck me, that thought to stay him, over-board,

Into the tumbling billows of the main. 20

O Lord! methought, what pain it was to drown!

What dreadful noise of water in mine ears!

What sights of ugly death within mine eyes!

Methought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks ;
 A thousand men, that fishes gnaw'd upon ; 25
 Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,
 Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,
 All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea :
 Some lay in dead men's skulls ; and in those holes
 Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept 30
 As 'twere in scorn of eyes), reflecting gems,
 That woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,
 And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatter'd by.

Brakenbury. Had you such leisure in the time of death,
 To gaze upon these secrets of the deep? 35

Clarence. Methought I had : and often did I strive
 To yield the ghost : but still the envious flood
 Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth
 To seek the empty, vast, and wand'ring air ;
 But smother'd it within my panting bulk, 40
 Which almost burst to belch it in the sea.

Brakenbury. Awak'd you not with this sore agony ?

Clarence. O, no, my dream was lengthen'd after life ;
 O, then began the tempest to my soul !
 I pass'd, methought, the melancholy flood, 45
 With that grim ferryman which poets write of,
 Unto the kingdom of perpetual night.
 The first that there did greet my stranger soul,
 Was my great father-in-law, renowned Warwick ;
 Who cried aloud,—“What scourge for perjury 50
 Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?”
 And so he vanished : Then came wand'ring by
 A shadow like an angel, with bright hair
 Dabbled in blood ; and he shriek'd out aloud,—
 “Clarence is come,—false, fleeting, perjur'd Clarence,— 55
 That stabb'd me in the field by Tewksbury ;—
 Seize on him, furies, take him to your torments !”

With that, methought, a legion of foul fiends
Environ'd me, and howled in mine ears
Such hideous cries, that, with the very noise, 60
I trembling wak'd, and, for a season after,
Could not believe but that I was in hell ;
Such terrible impression made my dream.

Brakenbury. No marvel, Lord, though it affrighted
you ;
I am afraid, methinks, to hear you tell it. 65

Clarence. O, Brakenbury, I have done these things—
That now give evidence against my soul,—
For Edward's sake ; and, see, how he requites me !—
O God ! if my deep prayers cannot appease thee,
But thou wilt be aveng'd on my misdeeds, 70
Yet execute thy wrath on me alone :
O, spare my guiltless wife and my poor children !—
I pray thee, gentle keeper, stay by me ;
My soul is heavy, and I fain would sleep.

Brakenbury. I will, my Lord ; God give your grace
good rest :— 75

[Clarence reposes himself on a chair]

Sorrow breaks seasons, and reposing hours,
Makes the night morning, and the noon-tide night.
Princes have but their titles for their glories,
An outward honour for an inward toil ;
And, for unfelt imaginations, 80
They often feel a world of restless cares :
So that, between their titles and low name,
There's nothing differs but the outward fame.

SIR HENRY WOTTON.

THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE.

How happy is he born and taught,
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill;
(
Whose passions not his masters are; 5
Whose soul is still prepared for Death,
Unti'd unto the world by care
Of public Fame or private Breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Nor vice; who never understood 10
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
Nor Rules of State, but Rules of good.

Who hath his life from Rumours freed
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose State can neither Flatterers feed, 15
Nor Ruin make oppressors great;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
With a Religious Book or Friend. 20

This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall:—
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And, having nothing, yet hath all.

JOHN MILTON.

SONNET VII.

How soon hath Time the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom sheweth.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arrived so near,
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits indueth.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even,
To that same lot, however mean, or high,
'Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven ;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great task-master's eye.

SONNET XVI.

When I consider how my light is spent,
 E'er half my days, in this dark world and wide,
 And that one Talent which is death to hide,
 Lodged with me useless, though my Soul more bent
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest he returning chide,
 "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied,"
 I fondly ask; but patience to prevent

That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
 Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best 10
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His State
 Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
 And post o'er Land and Ocean without rest.
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

II. PENSEROSO.

Hence vain deluding joys,
 The blood of folly without father bred.
 How little you bestead,
 Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys;
 Dwell in some idle brain, 5
 And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
 As thick and numberless
 As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
 Or likest hovering dreams
 The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train. 10
 But hail thou Goddess, sage and holy!
 Hail divinest Melancholy!
 Whose saintly visage is too bright
 To hit the sense of human sight;
 And therefore to our weaker view, 15
 O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue.
 Black, but such as in esteem,
 Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
 Or that starred Ethiope Queen that strove
 To set her beauty's praise above 20
 The Sea Nymphs, and their powers offended.
 Yet thou art higher far descended:
 Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
 To solitary Saturn bore;

His daughter she; in Saturn's reign 25
Such mixture was not held a stain.
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst, yet there was no fear of Jove, 30
Come pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of Cypress lawn, 35
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come; but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes: 40
There held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet, 45
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing.
And add to these retired Leisure
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure; 50
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The Cherub Contemplation,
And the mute Silence hist along, 55
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest saddest plight, ;
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,

While Cynthia checks her Dragon yoke
 Gently o'er the accustomed Oak. 60
 Sweet Bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
 Most musical, most melancholy!
 Thee, Chauntress oft the woods among
 I woo to hear thy even-song;
 And, missing thee, I walk unseen 65
 On the dry smooth-shaven green,
 To behold the wandering Moon,
 Riding near her highest noon,
 Like one that had been led astray
 Through the Heaven's wide pathless way, 70
 And oft, as if her head she bowed,
 Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
 Oft, on a plat of rising ground
 I hear the far-off Curfew sound,
 Over some wide-watered shore, 75
 Swinging slow with sullen roar;
 Or if the air will not permit,
 Some still removed place will fit,
 Where glowing Embers through the room
 Teach light to counterfeit a gloom, 80
 Far from all resort of mirth,
 Save the cricket on the hearth,
 Or the bellman's drowsy charm
 To bless the doors from nightly harm.
 Or let my lamp, at midnight hour 85
 Be seen in some high lonely tower,
 Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
 With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
 The spirit of Plato, to unfold
 What worlds or what vast regions hold 90
 The immortal mind, that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook;

And of those demons that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or underground,
 Whose power hath a true consent 95
 With Planet,* or with Element.

Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
 In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
 Or the tale of Troy divine; 100
 Or what (though rare) of later age
 Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.

But O sad Virgin, that thy power
 Might raise Musæus from his bow'r,
 Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing 105
 Such notes as warbled to the string
 Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
 And made Hell grant what Love did seek.

Or call up him that left half told
 The story of Cambuscan bold, 110
 Of Camball, and of Algarsife,

And who had Canacé to wife,
 That owned that virtuous ring and glass,
 And of the wondrous horse of brass,
 On which the Tartar King did ride: 115

And if aught else great bards beside
 In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
 Of tourneys, and of trophies hung;
 Of forests, and enchantments drear,
 Where more is meant than 'meets the ear. 120

Thus Night oft see me in thy pale career
 Till civil-suited Morn appear,
 Not trick'd and frownc'd as she was wont
 With the Attic Boy to hunt,
 But kerchieft in a comely cloud, 125
 While rocking winds are piping loud,

Or usher'd with a shower still,
 When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the rustling leaves
 With minute drops from off the eaves. 130
 And when the sun begins to fling
 His flaming beams, me, Goddess, bring
 To arched walks of twilight groves,
 And shadows brown that Sylvan loves,
 Of pine, or monumental oak, 135
 Where the rude axe, with heavéd stroke,
 Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt
 Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
 There in close covert by some brook,
 Where no profaner eye may look, 140
 Hide me from day's garish eye,
 While the bee with honied thigh
 That at her flowery work doth sing,
 And the waters murmuring
 With such consort as they keep 145
 Entice the dewy-feather'd sleep ;
 And let some strange mysterious dream
 Wave at his wings in airy stream
 Of lively portraiture display'd,
 Softly on my eyelids laid. 150
 And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,
 Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
 Or the unseen genius of the wood.
 But let my due feet never fail 155
 To walk the studious cloister's pale,
 And love the high-embowed roof,
 With antique pillars massy-proof,
 And storied windows richly dight
 Casting a dim religious light. 160

There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear
Dissolve me into extasies, 165
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell 170
Of every star that Heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew,
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give, 175
And I with thee will choose to live.

ANDREW MARVELL.

AN HORATIAN ODE UPON CROMWELL'S RETURN FROM IRELAND.

The forward youth that would appear
Must now forsake his Muses dear,
Nor in the shadows sing
His numbers languishing.

'Tis time to leave the books in dust, 5
And oil the unused armour's rust,
Removing from the wall
The corslet of the hall.

So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace, 10
But through adventurous war
Urgéd his active star.

And, like the three-fork'd lightning, first
Breaking the clouds where it was nursed,
Did through his own side 15
His fiery way divide.

For 'tis all one to courage high
The emulous or enemy ;
And with such, to inclose
Is more than to oppose. 20

Then burning through the air he went,
And palaces and temples rent :
 And Cæsar's head at last
 Did through his laurels blast.

'Tis madness to resist or blame 25
The force of angry heaven's flame :
 And if we would speak true,
 Much to the Man is due.

Who, from his private gardens where
He lived reserved and austere, 30
 As if his highest plot
 To plant the Bergamot,

Could by industrious valour climb
To win the great work of time,
 And cast the Kingdoms old 35
 Into another mould.

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient Rights in vain :
 But those do hold or break
 As men are strong or weak. 40

Nature, that hateth emptiness,
Allows of penetration less :
 And therefore must make room
 Where greater spirits come.

What field of all the Civil Wars, 45
Where his were not the deepest scars?
 And Hampton shews what part
 He had of wiser art.

Where, twining subtle fears with hope,
 He wove a net of such a scope, 50
 That Charles himself might chase
 To Carisbrook's narrow case

That thence the Royal actor borne
 The tragic scaffold might adorn :
 While round the arméd bands 55
 Did clap their bloody hands.

He nothing common did or mean
 Upon that memorable scene :
 But with his keener eye
 The axe's edge did try : 60

Nor call'd the Gods with vulgar spite
 To vindicate his helpless right,
 But bow'd his comely head,
 Down as upon a bed.

This was that memorable hour 65
 Which first assur'd the forcéd power.
 So when they did design
 The Capitol's first line,

A bleeding Head where they begun,
 Did fright the architects to run ; 70
 And yet in that the State
 Foresaw its happy fate.

And now the Irish are asham'd
 To see themselves in one year tam'd :
 So much one man can do, 75
 That doth both act and know.

They can affirm his praises best,
 And have, though overcome, confessed
 How good he is, how just,
 And fit for highest trust: 80

Nor yet grown stiffer with command,
 But still in the Republic's hand:
 How fit he is to sway
 That can so well obey.

He to the common feet presents 85
 A kingdom, for his first year's rents:
 And, what he may, forbears
 His fame to make it theirs:

And has his sword and spoils ungirt,
 To lay them at the public's skirt. 90
 So when the falcon high
 Falls heavy from the sky,

She, having kill'd, no more does search,
 But on the next green bough to perch;
 Where, when he first does lure, 95
 The falconer has her sure.

What may not then our Isle presume
 While victory his crest does plume?
 What may not others fear
 If thus he crown each year? 100

A Cæsar he ere long to Gaul,
 To Italy an Hannibal,
 And to all states not free
 Shall climacteric be.

The Pict no shelter now shall find 105
Within his party-colour'd mind;
But from this valour sad
Shrink underneath the plaid:

Happy if in the tufted brake
The English hunter him mistake. 110
Nor lay his hounds in near
The Caledonian deer.

But 'thou the War's and Fortune's son
March indefatigably on:
And for the last effect 115
Still keep thy sword erect;

Besides the force it has to fight
The spirits of the shady night,
The same art's that did gain
A power must it maintain. 120

HENRY VAUGHAN.

DEPARTED FRIENDS.

They are all gone into the world of light,
And I sit ling'ring here !
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast 5
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Of those faint beams in which this hill is drest
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days ; 10
My days, which are at best but chill and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope ! and high Humility !
High as the Heavens above ;
These are your walks, and you have shew'd them me 15
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous Death ; the Jewell of the Just !
Shining nowhere but in the dark ;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark ! 20

He that hath found some fledg'd bird's nest may know
At first sight of the bird be flown;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as Angels in some brighter dreams 25
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted
themes,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confin'd into a tomb,
Her captive flames must needs burn there; 30
But when the hand that locked her up gives room
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories onder Thee!
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall 35
Into true liberty!

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective still as they pass:
Or else remove me hence unto that hill,
Where I shall need no glass. 40

JOHN DRYDEN.

TO MY DEAR FRIEND MR. CONGREVE ON HIS COMEDY CALLED THE DOUBLE DEALER.

Well then, the promised hour is come at last,
The present age of wit obscures the past :
Strong were our sires, and as they fought they writ,
Conquering with force of arms and dint of wit :
Theirs was the giant race before the flood ; 5
And thus, when Charles returned, our Empire stood.
Like Janus, he the stubborn soil manured,
With rules of husbandry the rankness cured ;
Tamed us to manners, when the stage was rude,
And boisterous English wit with art endued. 10
Our age was cultivated thus at length,
But what we gained in skill we lost in strength.
Our builders were with want of genius cursed ;
The second temple was not like the first ;
Till you, the best Vitruvius, come at length, 15
Our beauties equal, but excell our strength.
Firm Doric pillars found your solid base,
The fair Corinthian Crowns the higher space ;
Thus all, below is strength, and all above in grace.
In easy dialogue is Fletcher's praise ; 20
He moved the mind, but had not power to raise.
Great Jonson did by strength of judgment please,
Yet, doubling Fletcher's force, he want's his ease.

In differing talents both adorned their age,
 One for the study, t'other for the stage. 25
 But both to Congreve justly shall submit,
 One matched in judgment, both o'ermatched in wit.
 In him all beauties of this age we see
 Etheridge his courtship, Southern's purity,
 The satire, wit, and strength of manly Wycherly. 30
 All this in blooming youth you have achieved;
 Nor are your foiled contemporaries grieved.
 So much the sweetness of your manners move,
 We cannot envy you, because we love.
 Fabius might joy in Scipio, when he saw 35
 A beardless Consul made against the law,
 And join his suffrage to the votes of Rome,
 Though he with Hannibal was overcome.
 Thus old Romano bowed to Raphael's fame,
 And scholar to the youth he taught became. 40

Oh that your brows my laurel had sustained !
 Well had I been deposed, if you had reigned :
 The father had descended for the son,
 For only you are lineal to the throne.
 Thus, when the State one Edward did depose, 45
 A greater Edward in his room arose :
 But now, not I, but poetry is cursed ;
 For Tom the second reigns like Tom the first.
 But let them not mistake my patron's part
 Nor call his charity their own desert. 50
 Yet this I prophesy,—Thou shall be seen,
 Though with some short parenthesis between,
 High on the throne of wit, and, seated there,
 Not mine—that's little—but thy laurel wear:
 Thy first attempt an early promise made ; 55
 That early promise this has more than paid.

So bold, yet so judiciously you dare,
 That your least praise is to be regular.
 Time, place, and action may with pains be wrought,
 But genius must be born, and never can be taught. 60
 This is your portion, this your native store :
 Heaven, that but once was prodigal before,
 To Shakespeare gave as much ; she could not give him
 more.

Maintain your post : that's all the fame you need ;
 For 'tis impossible you should proceed! 65
 Already I am worn with cares and age,
 And just abandoning the ungrateful stage :
 Unprofitably kept at Heaven's expense,
 I live a rent-charge on His providence :
 But you, whom every Muse and grace adorn, 70
 Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
 Be kind to my remains ; and oh, defend,
 Against your judgment, your departed friend !
 Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
 But shade those laurels which descend to you : 75
 And take for tribute what these lines express ;
 You merit more, nor could my love do less.

EDWARD YOUNG.

FROM NIGHT THOUGHTS—I.

Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears
The palm, "That all men are about to live,"
For ever on the brink of being born.
All pay themselves the compliment to think
They one day shall not drive: and their pride 5
On this reversal takes up ready praise;
At least their own; their future selves applauds;
How excellent that life they ne'er will lead!
'Time lodg'd in their own hands is folly's vails;
That lodg'd in fate's, to wisdom they consign; 10
The thing they can't but purpose, they postpone;
'Tis not in folly, not to scorn a fool;
And scarce in human wisdom to do more.
All promise is poor dilatory man,
And that thro' ev'ry stage: when young, indeed, 15
In full content we, sometimes, nobly rest,
Unanxious for ourselves; and only wish,
As dutious sons, our fathers were more wise.
At thirty man suspects himself a fool;
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan; 20
At fifty chides his infamous delay,
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;
In all the magnanimity of thought
Resolves; and re-resolves; then dies the same.
And why? Because he thinks himself immortal. 25
All men think all men mortal but themselves;
Themselves, when some alarming shock of fate
Strikes thro' their wounded hearts the sudden dread;

But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
 Soon close ; where passed the shaft, no trace is found. 30
 As from the wing no scar the sky retains ;
 The parted wave no furrow from the keel ;
 So dies in human hearts the thought of death.
 Ev'n with the tender tear which nature sheds
 O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave. 35
 Can I forget Philander ? That were strange !
 O my full heart—But should I give it vent,
 The longest night, though longer far, would fail,
 And the lark listen to my midnight song.
 The spritely lark's shrill matin wakes the morn ; 40
 Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,
 I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer
 The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel ! like thee,
 And call the stars to listen : Every star
 Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay. 45
 Yet be not vain ; there are, who thine excel,
 And charm thro' distant ages : wrapt in shade,
 Pris'ner of darkness ! to the silent hours,
 How often I repeat their rage divine,
 To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from woe ! 50
 I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire.
 Dark, tho' not blind, like thee, Mæonides !
 Or, Milton ! thee ; ah could I reach your strain !
 Or his, who made Mæonides our own.
 Man too he sung : immortal man I sing ; 55
 Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life ;
 What, now, but immortality can please ?
 O had he press'd his theme, pursu'd the track,
 Which opens out of darkness into day !
 O had he, mounted on his wing of fire, 60
 Soar'd where I sink, and sung immortal man !
 How had it blest mankind, and rescu'd me !

ALEXANDER POPE.

PART OF THE EPISTLE TO DR. ARBUTHNOT.

Why did I write? What sin to me unknown
Dipt me in ink? My parent's, or my own?
As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame,
I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.
I left no calling for this idle trade, 5
No duty broke, no father disobeyed:

The Muse but served to ease some friend, not wife,
To help me through this long disease, my life;
To second, Arbuthnot! thy art and care,
And teach the being you preserved to bear. 10

But why then publish? Granville the polite,
And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write;
Well-natured Garth inflamed with early praise;
And Congreve loved, and Swift endured my lays;
The courtly Talbot, Somers, Sheffield read; 15
Even mitred Rochester would nod the head,
And St. John's self (great Dryden's friends before)
With open arms received one Poet more.

Happy my studies when by these approved!
Happier their author, when by these beloved! 20
From these the world will judge of men and books,
Not from the Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cookes.

Soft were my numbers; who could take offence
While pure description held the place of sense?
Like gentle Fanny's was my flowery theme, 25
A painted mistress, or a purling stream.

Yet then did Gildon draw his venal quill;
 I wished the man a dinner and sate still.
 Yet then did Dennis rave in furious fret;
 I never answered—I^d was not in debt. 30
 If want provoked, or madness made them print,
 I waged no war with Bedlam or the Mint.

Did some more sober critic come abroad—
 If wrong, I smiled, if right, I kissed the rod.
 Pains, reading, study, are their just pretence, 35
 And all they want is spirit, taste and sense.
 Commas and points they set exactly right,
 And 'twere a sin to rob them of their mite;
 Yet ne'er one sprig of laurel graced these ribalds,
 From slashing Bentley down to piddling Tibalds: 40
 Each wight, who reads not, and but scans and spells,
 Each word-catcher, that lives on syllables,
 Even such small critics, some regard may claim,
 Preserved in Milton's or in Shakespeare's name.
 Pretty! in amber to observe the forms 45
 Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms!
 The things we know are neither rich nor rare,
 But wonder how the devil they got there.

Were others angry—I excused them too;
 Well might they rage, I gave them but their due. 50
 A man's true merit 'tis not hard to find;
 But each man's secret standard in his mind,
 That casting-weight pride adds to emptiness,
 This, who can gratify, for who can guess?
 The bard whom pilfered pastorals renown,, 55
 Who turns a Persian tale for half-a-crown,
 Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
 And strains from hard-bound brains eight lines a year;
 He, who still wanting, though he lives on theft,
 Steals much, spends little, yet has nothing left: 60

And he, who now to sense, now nonsense leaning,
Means not, but blunders round about a meaning:

And he whose fustian's so sublimely bad,

It is not poetry, but prose run mad:

All these, my modest Satire bade translate, 65

And owned that nine such poets made a Tate.

How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and chafe!

And swear, not Addison himself was safe.

Peace to all such! but were there one whose fires

True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires; 70

Blest with each talent, and each art to please,

And born to write, converse, and live with ease:

Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,

Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,

View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes, 75

And hate for arts that caused himself to rise;

Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,

And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;

Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,

Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike; 80

Alike reserved to blame, or to commend,

A timorous foe, and a suspicious friend;

Dreading e'en fools, by flatterers besieged,

And so obliging that he ne'er obliged;

Like Cato, give his little Senate laws, 85

And sit attentive to his own applause;

While wits and Templars every sentence raise,

And wonder with a foolish face of praise—

Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?

Who would not weep, if Atticus were he! 90

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

Father of all! in ev'ry age,
In ev'ry clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.

Thou Great First Cause, least understood! 5
Who all my sense confined
To know but this, that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind ;

Yet gave me in this dark estate.
To see the good from ill: 10
And binding Nature fast in Fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This teach me more than hell to shun, 15
That, more than heav'n pursue.

What blessings Thy free bounty gives
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives ;
T' enjoy is to obey. 20

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think Thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round :

WILLIAM COLLINS.

HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE.

ODE WRITTEN IN THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR 1746.

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest !
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod 5
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung ;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung ;
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay ; 10
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there !

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

FROM THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES.

Where then shall Hope and Fear their objects find?
 Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
 Must helpless man in ignorance sedate,
 Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
 Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise, 5
 No cries invoke the mercies of the skies?
 Inquirer, cease; petitions yet remain,
 Which Heav'n may hear: nor deem Religion vain.
 Still raise for good the supplicating voice
 But leave to Heav'n the measure and the choice. 10
 Safe in his pow'r, whose eyes discern afar
 The secret ambush of a specious pray'r,
 Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
 Secure, whate'er he gives, he gives the best.
 Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires, 15
 And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
 Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
 Obedient passions, and a will resign'd;
 For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
 For patience, sov'reign o'er transmuted ill; 20
 For faith, that panting for a happier seat,
 Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat.
 These goods for man the laws of Heav'n ordain,
 These goods he grants, who grants the pow'r to gain;
 With these celestial wisdom calms the mind, 25
 And makes the happiness she does not find.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. ROBERT LEVET.

Condemn'd to Hope's delusive mine,
As on we toil from day to day,
By sudden blasts, or slow decline,
Our social comforts drop away.

Well try'd through many a varying year, 5
See Levett to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of ev'ry friendless name the friend

Yet still he fills affection's eye,
Obscurely wise, and coarsely kind; 10
Nor, letter'd Arrogance, deny
Thy praise to merit unrefin'd.

When fainting nature call'd for aid,
And hov'ring death prepar'd the blow,
His vigorous remedy displayed 15
The power of art without the show.

In misery's darkest cavern known,
His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless Anguish pour'd his groan,
And lonely want retir'd to die. 20

No summons mock'd by chill delay,
' No petty gain disdain'd by pride;
The modest wants of ev'ry day
The toil of ev'ry day supplied.

His Virtues walk'd their narrow round, 25
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure th' Eternal Master found
The single talent well employ'd.

The busy day—the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by; 30
His frame was firm—his powers were bright,
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then with no fiery throbbing pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke at once the vital chain, 35
And freed his soul the nearest way.

THOMAS GRAY.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

A PINDARIC ODE.

I.

1. Awake, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs

A thousand rills their mazy progress take :
The laughing flowers that round them blow, 5
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Through verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign :
Now rolling down the steep amain, 10
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour ;
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

2. Oh ! Sov'reign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell ! the sullen Cares 15

And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curb'd the fury of his car,
And dropt his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching 'on the sceptred hand 20
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes and flagging wing :

Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

3. Thee the voice, the dance, obey, 25
Temper'd to thy warbled lay.
O'er Idalia's velvet-green
The rosy-crowned Loves are seen
On Cythera's day;
With antic Sports, and blue-eyed Pleasures, 30
Frisking light in frolic measures;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet:
To brisk notes in cadence beating,
Glance their many-twinkling feet. 35
Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare:
Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay.
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom, move 40
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

II.

1. Man's feeble race what ills await.
Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate! 45
The fond complaint, my Song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he giv'n in vain the heavenly Muse?
Night and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry, 50
He gives to range the dreary sky;

Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of war.

2. In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam, 55
The Muse has broke the twilight gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the od'rous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat. 60
In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the Goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and gen'rous Shame,
Th' unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame. 65

3. Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles, that crown th' Ægean deep,
Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering lab'rinth creep, 70
How do your tuneful Echoes languish,
Mute, but to the voice of anguish!
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around;
Ev'ry shade and hallow'd fountain 75
Murmur'd deep a solemn sound:
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of Tyrant Power
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains. 80
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, oh Albion! next, thy sea-encircled coast.

III.

1. Far from the sun and summer-gale,
 In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid,
 What time, where lucid Avon stray'd, 85
 To him the mighty Mother did unveil
 Her awful face: the dauntless Child
 Stretch'd forth his little arms and smiled.
 "This pencil take (she said), whose colours clear
 Richly paint the vernal year: 90
 Thine too these golden keys, immortal Boy!
 This can unlock the gates of Joy;
 Of Horror that, and thrilling Fears,
 Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic Tears."

2. Nor second He, that rode sublime 95
 Upon the seraph-wings of Extasy,
 The secrets of th'Abyss to spy.
 He pass'd the flaming bounds of Place and Time:
 The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze,
 Where Angels tremble while they gaze, 100
 He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,
 Closed his eyes in endless night.
 Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
 Wide o'er the fields of Glory bear
 Two coursers of ethereal race, 105
 With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding
 pace.

3. Hark, his hands the lyre explore!
 Bright-eyed Fancy, hov'ring o'er,
 Scatters from her pictured urn
 Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn. 110

But ah! 'tis heard no more—

Oh! lyre divine, what daring Spirit

Wakes thee now? Though he inherit

Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,

That the Theban Eagle bear,

115

Sailing with supreme dominion

Through the azure deep of air:

Yet oft before his infant eyes would run

Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray,

With orient hues, unborrow'd of the Sun :

120

Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way

Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,

Beneath the Good how far—but far above the Great.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

THE TRAVELLER OR A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

Remote, unfriended, melancholy slow,
Or by the lazy Scheld or wandering Po ;
Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door ;
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies, 5
A weary waste, expanding to the skies ;
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee ;
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain. 10
Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling Guardian Saints attend :
Blest be that spot where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire :
Blest that abode where want and pain repair, 15
And every stranger finds a ready chair :
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crown'd,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale ; 20
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good.
But me, not destin'd such delights to share,
My prime of life in wandering spent and care ;
Impell'd, with steps unceasing, to pursue 25
Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies ;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own. 30

E'en now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend ;
And plac'd on high above the storm's career,
Look downward where an hundred realms appear ;
Lakes, forests, cities, plains extending wide, 35
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.

When thus Creation's charms around combine,
Amidst the store should thankless pride repine ?
Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain ? 40
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man ;
And wiser he, whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind.
Ye glittering towns, with wealth and splendour crown'd ; 45
Ye fields, where summer spreads profusion round ;
Ye lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale ;
Ye bending swains, that dress the flowery vale ;
For me your tributary stores combine :
Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine. 50

As some lone miser, visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er ;
Hoards after hoards his rising raptures fill,
Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still :
Thus to my breast alternate passions rise, 55
Pleas'd with each good that Heaven to man supplies :
Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the hoard of human bliss so small ;
And oft I wish amidst the scene to find
Some spot to real happiness consign'd, 60
Where my worn soul, each wandering hope at rest,
May gather bliss to see my fellows blest.

But where to find that happiest spot below
Who can direct, when all pretend to know ?

The shudd'ring tenant of the frigid zone 65
Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own ;
Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And his long nights of revelry and ease :
The naked Negro, panting at the line,
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine, 70
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
Such is the patriot's boast where'er we roam ;
His first, best country ever is at home.
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare, 75
And estimate the blessings which they share,
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
An equal portion dealt to all mankind ;
As different good, by art or nature given,
To different nations makes their blessing even. 80
Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at labour's earnest call :
With food as well the peasant is supply'd
On Idra's cliffs as Arno's shelvy side ;
And though the rocky-crested summits frown, 85
These rocks by custom turn to beds of down.
From art more various are the blessings sent ;
Wealth, commerce, honour, liberty, content.
Yet these each other's power so strong contest,
That either seems destructive of the rest. 90
Where wealth and freedom reign, contentment fails ;
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.
Hence every state, to one lov'd blessing prone,
Conforms and models life to that alone.
Each to the fav'rite happiness attends, 95
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends :
Till, carried to excess in each domain,
This fav'rite good begets peculiar pain.

But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies : 100
Here for a while my proper cares resign'd,
Here let me sit in sorrow for mankind ;
Like yon neglected shrub at random cast,
That shades the steep and sighs at every blast.

Far to the right where Apennine ascends, 105
Bright as the summer, Italy extends :
Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride ;
While oft some temple's mould'ring tops between
With venerable grandeur mark the scene. 110

Could nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.
Whatever fruits in different climes are found,
That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground ;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear, 115
Whose bright succession decks the varied year ;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky—
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die ;
These, here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil ; 120
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.
In florid beauty groves and fields appear ; 125
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign :
Though poor, luxurious ; though submissive, vain ;
Though grave, yet trifling ; zealous, yet untrue ;
And e'en in penance planning sins anew. 130
All evils here contaminate the mind
That opulence departed leaves behind.

For wealth was theirs, not far removed the date
When commerce proudly flourish'd through the state :
At her command the palace learnt to rise, 135
Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies,
The canvas glow'd, beyond e'en nature warm,
The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form,
Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display'd her sail ; 140
While naught remain'd of all that riches gave,
But towns unmann'd, and lords without a slave :
And late the nation found with fruitless skill
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.

Yet still the loss of wealth is here supplied 145
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride ;
From these the feeble heart and long-fall'n mind
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,
The paste-board triumph and the cavalcade, 150
Processions form'd for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguil'd ;
The sports of children satisfy the child.
Each nobler aim, repress'd by long control, 155
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul ;
While low delights succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanness occupy the mind :
As in those domes where Cæsars once bore sway,
Defac'd by time and tott'ring in decay, 160
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed ;
And, wondering man could want the larger pile,
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile.

My soul, turn from them, turn we to survey 165
Where rougher climes a nobler race display ;

Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.
No product here the barren hills afford,
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword : 170
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter lingering chills the lap of May :
No zephyr fondly sues the mountain's breast,
But meteors glare, and stormy glooms invest.

Yet, still, e'en here content can spread a charm, 175
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm,
Though poor the peasant's hut, his feasts though small,
He sees his little lot the lot of all ;
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head
To shame the meanness of his humble shed ; 180
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal
To make him loathe his vegetable meal ;
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting fits him to the soil.
Cheerful at morn he wakes from short repose, 185
Breathes the keen air, and carols as he goes ;
With patient angle trolls the finny deep ;
Or drives his vent'rous plough-share to the steep ;
Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way,
And drags the struggling savage into day. 190
At night returning, every labour sped,
He sits him down the monarch of a shed ;
Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
His children's looks, that brighten at the blaze ;
While his lov'd partner, boastful of her hoard, 195
Displays her cleanly platter on the board :
And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart
Imprints the patriot passion on his heart ; 200

And e'en those ills that round his mansion rise
 Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.
 Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
 And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms;
 And as a child, when scaring sounds molest, 205
 Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
 So the loud torrent and the whirlwinds roar
 But find him to his native mountains more.
 Such are the charms to barren states assigned,
 Their wants but few, their wishes all confined. 210
 Yet let them only share the praises due:
 If few their wants, their pleasures are but few;
 For every want that stimulates the breast
 Becomes a source of pleasure when redressed;
 Whence from such lands each pleasing science flies 215
 That first excites desire, and then supplies;
 Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
 To fill the languid pause with finer joy;
 Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
 Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame. 220
 'Their level life, is but a smouldering fire,
 Unquenched by want, unfanned by strong desire;
 Unfit for raptures, or if raptures cheer
 On some high festival of once a year,
 In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire, 225
 Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.
 But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow:
 'Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low;
 For, as refinement stops, from sire to son
 Unalter'd unimprov'd the manners run, 230
 And love's and friendship's finely pointed dart
 Fall blunted from each indurated heart.
 Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
 May sit, like falcons cowering on the nest;

But all the gentler morals, such as play 235
Thro' life's more cultur'd walks, and charm the way,
These, far dispers'd, on timorous pinions fly,
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
I turn; and France displays her bright domain. 240
Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please,
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire?
Where shading elms along the margin grew, 245
And freshen'd from the wave the zephyr flew;
And haply, though my harsh touch, falt'ring still,
But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill,
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance, forgetful of the noon-tide hour. 250
Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze,
And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,
Has frisk'd beneath the burthen of threescore.

So blest a life these thoughtless realms display; 255
Thus idly busy rolls their world away;
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honour forms the social temper here.
Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or e'en imaginary worth obtains, 260
Here passes current: paid from hand to hand,
It shifts in splendid traffic round the land;
From courts to camps, to cottages, it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise.
They please, are pleas'd; they give to get esteem; 265
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies also room to rise;

For praise too dearly lov'd, or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought, 270
And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.
Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart;
Here vanity assumes her pert grimace, 275
And trims her robes of frieze with copper lace;
Here begger pride defrauds her daily cheer,
'To boast one splendid banquet once a year;
The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause. 280

To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies.
Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land,
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide, 285
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.
Onward methinks, and diligently slow,
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow;
Spreads its long arms amid the watery roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore. 290
While the pent ocean rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile:
'The slow canal, the yellow-blossomed vale,
'The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
'The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,— 295
A new creation rescued from his reign.

Thus while around the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begets a love of gain. 300
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,

Are here display'd. Their much-lov'd wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts :
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear ; 305
E'en liberty itself is bartered here,
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies ;
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys ;
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves,
Here wretches seek dishonourable graves, 310
And calmly bent, to servitude conform,
Dull as their lakes that slumber in the storm.

Heavens ! how unlike their Belgic sires of old !
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold ;
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow : 315
How much unlike the sons of Britain now !

Fir'd at the sound, my genius spreads her wing,
And flies where Britain courts the western spring ;
Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
And brighter streams than fam'd Hydaspes glide. 320
There all around the gentlest breezes stray ;
There gentle music melts on every spray ;
Creation's mildest charms are there combin'd,
Extremes are only in the master's mind !
Stern o'er each bosom Reason holds her state, 325
With daring aims irregularly great ;
Pride in their port defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of human kind pass by ;
Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
By forms unfashion'd, fresh from Nature's hand, 330
Fierce in their native hardness of soul,
True to imagined right, above control,
While e'en the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man.

Thine freedom, thine the blessings pictur'd here ; 335
Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear :

Too blest indeed, were such without alloy !
 But foster'd e'en by Freedom ills annoy :
 That independence Britons prize too high
 Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie ; 340
 The self-dependent lordlings stand alone,
 All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown.
 Here, by the bonds of nature feebly held,
 Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd ;
 Ferments arise, imprison'd factions roar, 345
 Repressed ambition struggles round her shore,
 Till, over-wrought, the general system feels,
 Its motions stop, or phrenzy fire the wheels.

Nor this the worst. As nature's ties decay,
 As duty, love and honour fail to sway, 350
 Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
 Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.
 Hence all obedience bows to these alone,
 And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown :
 Till time may come, when, stripped of all her charms, 355
 The land of scholars and the nurse of arms,
 Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,
 Where kings have toil'd and poets wrote for fame,
 One sink of level avarice shall lie,
 And scholars, soldiers, kings, unhonour'd die. 360

Yet think not, thus when Freedom's ills I state,
 I mean to flatter kings, or court the great :
 Ye powers of truth, that bid my soul aspire,
 Far from my bosom drive the low desire.
 And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel 365
 The rabble's rage and tyrant's angry steel ;
 Thou transitory flower, alike undone
 By proud contempt or favour's fostering sun ;
 Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure !
 I only would repress them to secure : 370

For just experience tells, in every soil,
'That those who think must govern those that toil;
And all that Freedom's highest aims can reach,
Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each.
Hence, should one order disproportioned grow, 375
Its double weight must ruin all below.

O then how blind to all that truth requires,
Who think it freedom when a part aspires!
Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise in arms,
Except when fast approaching danger warm ; 380
But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
Contracting regal power to stretch their own,
When I behold a factious band agree
To call it freedom when themselves are free,
Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw, 385
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law,
The wealth of climes where savage nations roam
Pillaged from slaves to purchase slaves at home,
Fear, pity, justice, indignation start,
Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart ; 390
Till half a patriot, half a coward grown,
I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.

Yes, brother, curse with me that baleful hour
When first ambition struck at regal power ;
And thus polluting honour at its source, 395
Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force.
Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled shore,
Her useful sons exchanged for useless ore?
Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste
Like flaring tapers brightening as they waste ? 400
Seen opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
Lead stern depopulation in her train,
And over fields where scattered hamlets rose
In barren solitary pomp repose ?

Have we not seen at pleasure's lordly call 405
The smiling long-frequented village fall?
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decayed,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forced from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse cliques beyond the western main; 410
Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
And Niagara stuns with thundering sound!

Even now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
Through tangled forests and through dangerous ways,
Where beasts with man divided empire claim, 415
And the brown Indian marks with murderous aim;
There while above the giddy tempest flies,
And all around distressful yells arise,
The pensive exile, bending with his woe,
To stop too fearful, and too faint to go, 420
Casts a long look where England's glories shine,
And bids his bosom sympathise with mine.

Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
That bliss which only centres in the mind:
Why have I strayed from pleasure and repose, 425
To seek a good each government bestows?
In every government, though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings or tyrant laws restrain,
How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure! 430
Still to ourselves in every place consigned,
Our own felicity we make or find:
With secret curse, which no loud storm annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.
The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel, 435
Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed to steel,
To men remote from power but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith, and conscience all our own.

ROBERT BURNS.

IS THERE FOR HONEST POVERTY.

Is there for honest poverty
That hangs his head, and a'that?
The coward slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a'that!
For a'that, and a'that, 5
Our toil's obscure, and a'that;
The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a'that
What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden gray, and a'that; 10
Gi'e fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a'that!
For a'that, and a'that,
Their tinsel show, and a'that;
The honest man, though e'er sae poor, 15
Is king of men for a'that.
Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord
Wha struts, and stares, and a'that;
Though hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a'that! 20
For a'that, and a'that,
His riband, star, and a'that;
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a'that.
A King can mak a belted knight, 25
A marquis, duke, and a'that;
But an honest man's aboon his might—
Guid faith, he maunna fa' that!

For a'that, and a'that,
 Their dignities, and a'that, 30
 The pith o'sense, and pride o'worth,
 Are higher ranks than a'that.

Then let us pray that come it may—
 As come it will for a'that,—
 That sense and worth, o'er a'the earth, 35
 May bear the gree, and a'that.
 For a'that, and a'that,
 It's comm' yet, for a'that,
 That man to man, the warld o'er,
 Shall brothers be for a'that! 40

HIGHLAND MARY.

Ye banks and braes and streams around
 The castle o'Montgomery,
 Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
 Your waters never drumlie!
 There simmer first unfaulds her robes, 5
 And there the langest tarry ;
 For there I took the last fareweel
 Of my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
 How rich the hawthorn's blossom, 10
 As, underneath their fragrant shade,
 I clasped her to my bosom !
 The golden hours, on angel wings,
 Flew o'er me and my dearie ;
 For dear to me as light and life 15
 Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and locked embrace,
Our parting was in fu' tender ;
And pledging aft to meet again,
 We tore oursel's asunder. 20
But oh ! fell Death's untimely frost,
 That nipt my flower sae early !
Now green's the sod and cauld's the clay
 That wraps my Highland Mary !

O pale, pale now those rosy lips, 25
 I aft hae kissed sae fondly !
And closed for aye, the sparkling glance,
 That dwelt on me sae kindly !
And mouldering now in silent dust
 That heart that lo'ed me dearly ! 30
But still within my bosom's core
 Shall live my Highland Mary.

OF A'THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLOW.

O' a' the airts the wind can blaw,
 I dearly like the west ;
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
 The lassie I lo'e best.
There wild woods grow, and rivers row, 5
 And mony a hill between ;
But day and night my fancy's flight
 Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
 I see her sweet and fair ; 10
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
 I hear her charm the air ;

There's not a bonnie flower that springs
 By fountain, shaw, or green,
 There's not a bonnie bird that sings, 15
 But minds me o' my Jean.

Æ FOND KISS.

Æ fond kiss, and then we sever ;
 Æ farewell, and then, for ever !
 Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
 Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
 Who shall say that fortune grieves him, 5
 While the star of hope she leaves him ?
 Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me ;
 Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
 Naething could resist my Nancy ; 10
 But to see her was to love her ;
 Love but her, and love for ever.
 Had we never loved sae kindly,
 Had we never loved sae blindly,
 Never met, or never parted, 15
 We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest !
 Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest !
 Thine be ilka 'joy and treasure,
 Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure ! 20
 Æ fond kiss, and then we sever ;
 Æ fareweel, alas, for ever !
 Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
 Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

WILLIAM COWPER.

THE DIVERTING HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN.

SHEWING HOW HE WENT FURTHER THAN HE INTENDED,
AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN.

John Gilpin was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A train-band captain eke was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear— 5
Though wedded we have been
'These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen.

To-morrow is our wedding day,
And we will then repair 10
Unto the Bell at Edmonton,
All in a chaise and pair.

My sister, and my sister's child,
Myself and children three,
Will fill the chaise ; so you must ride 15
On horseback after we.

He soon replied,—I do admire
Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
Therefore it shall be donè. 20

I am a linen draper bold
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the Calender
Will lend his horse to go.

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin,—that's well said; 25
And for that wine is dear,
We will be furnish'd with our own,
Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kiss'd his loving wife ;
O'erjoyed was he to find
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allow'd
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stay'd,
Where they did all get in ;
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin. 40

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
Were never folk so glad,
The stones did rattle underneath,
As if Ch&pside were mad.

45

John Gilpin at his horse's side
Seized fast the flowing mane,
And up he got in haste to ride,
But soon came down again ;

For saddle-tree scarce reach'd had he,
His journey to begin, 50
When, turning round his head he saw
Three customers come in.

So down he came ; for loss of time,
Although it grieved him sore,
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew, 55
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers
Were suited to their mind,
When Betty screaming came down stairs,—
The wine is left behind. 60

Good lack ! quoth he—yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword
When I do exercise.

Now Mistress Gilpin (careful soul) ! 65
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she loved,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew, 70
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipp'd from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brush'd and neat, 75
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,
With caution and good heed. 80

But finding soon a smother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which gall'd him in his seat.

So, fair and softly, John, he cried 85
But John he cried in vain;
The trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright, 90
He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got 95
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or naught;
Away went hat and wig;
He little dreamt, when he set out,
Of running such a rig. 100

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern 105
The bottles he had slung;
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children scream'd,
Up flew the windows all; 110
And every soul cried out, well done!
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he?
His fame soon spread around,
He carries weight! he rides a race! 115
'Tis for a thousand pound!

And still, as fast as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view,
How in a trice the turnpike-men
Their gates wide open threw. 120

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shatter'd at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road, 125
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
As they had basted been.

But still he seem'd to carry weight,
With leathern girdle braced; 130
For all might see the bottle-necks
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols did he play,
Until he came unto the Wash 135
Of Edmonton so gay;

And there he threw the wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling hoop,
Or a wild-geese at play. 140

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wondering much
To see how he did ride.

Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house, 145
They all at once did cry;
The dinner waits, and we are tired:
Said Gilpin—so am I!

But yet his horse was not a whit
Inclined to tarry there; 150
For why?—His owner had a house
Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,
Shot by an archer strong;
So did he fly—which brings me to 155
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin out of breath,
And sore against his will,
Till at his friend the Calender's
His horse at last stood still. 160

The Calender, amazed to see
His neighbour in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him :

What news? What news? your tidings tell ; 165
Tell me you must and shall—
Say why bare-headed you are come,
Or why you come at all?

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
And loved a timely joke ; 170
And thus unto the Calender
In merry guise he spoke :

I came because your horse would come ;
And, if I well forebode,
My hat and wig will soon be here, 175
They are upon the road.

The Calender right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Returned him not a single word,
But to the house went in ; 180

Whence straight he came with hat and wig ;
A wig that flow'd behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn 185
Thus show'd his ready wit,
My head is twice as big as yours,
They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face ; 190
And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case.

Said John, it is my wedding day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton, 195
And I should dine at Ware.

So turning to his horse, he said
I am in haste to dine ;
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine. 200

Ah, luckless speech, and bootless boast !
For which he paid full dear ;
For, while he spake, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear ;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he 205
Had heard a lion roar,
And gallop'd off with all his might,
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig : 210
He lost them sooner than at first,
For why?—they were too big.

Now mistress Gilpin, when she saw
Her husband posting down
Into the country far away, 215
She pull'd out half a crown ;

And thus 'unto the youth she said,
That drove them to the Bell,
This shall be yours, when you bring back
My husband safe and well. 220

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
John coming back amain;
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
By catching at his rein;

But not performing what he meant, 225
And gladly would have done,
The frightened steed he frightened more,
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went post-boy at his heels, 230
The post-boy's horse right glad to miss
The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With post-boy scampering in the rear, 235
They raised the huc and cry:—

Stop thief! stop thief!—a highway man!
Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that passed that way
Did join in the pursuit. 240

And now the turnpike gates again
Flew open in short space;
The toll-men thinking as before,
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too, 245
For he got first to town;
Nor stopp'd till where he had got up,
He did again get down.

New let us sing, long live the king,
And Gilpin, long live he; 250
And when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see!

LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines 5
Of never-failing skill
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread 10
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence 15
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour ;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

20

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain :
God is his own interpreter
And he will make it plain.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

ARGUMENT.

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

PART I.

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide, 5
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he, 10
'Hold off! unhand me, greybeard loon!
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner, 20

'The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The sun came up upon the left, 25
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
'Till over the mast at noon—' 30
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes 35
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner. 40

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud, 75
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine.'

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!— 80
Why look'st thou so?'—'With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

PART II.

The sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left 85
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo! 90

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow,
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay, 95
That made the breeze to blow!

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist :
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist. 100
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
'That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze blew, the 'white foam flew,
The furrow followed free ;
We were the first that ever burst 105
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be ;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea ! 110

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean. 115

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink ; 120
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !
That ever this should be !
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs 125
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night :
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white. 130

And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit, that plagued us so ;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought, 135
Was withered at the root ;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah ! well a-day ! what evil looks
Had I from old and young ! 140
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III.

There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time ! a weary time ! 145
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist 150
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist !
 And still it neared and neared :
 As if it dodged a water sprite, 155
 It plunged and tacked and veered.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 We could not laugh nor wail :
 Through utter drought all dumb we stood !
 A bit my arm, I sucked the blood, 160
 And cried, A sail ! a sail !

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 Agape they heard me call :
 Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,
 And all at once their breath drew in, 165
 As they were drinking all.

See ! see ! (I cried) she tacks no more !
 Hither to work us weal ;
 Without a breeze, without a tide,
 She steadies with upright keel ! 170

The western wave was all aflame.
 The day was well-nigh done !
 Almost upon the western wave
 Rested the broad bright Sun ;
 When that strange shape drove suddenly 175
 Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars.
 (Heaven's Mother send us grace !)
 As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
 With broad and burning face. 180

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

Are those her ribs through which the Sun 185
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free, 190
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came, 195
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistled thrice.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark; 200
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip! 205
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed
white;
From the sails the dew did drip—

Till clomb above the eastern bar
 The horned Moon, with one bright star 210
 Within the nether tip.

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
 To quick for groan or sigh,
 Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
 And cursed me with his eye. 215

Four times fifty living men,
 (And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
 With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
 They dropped down one by one.

The souls did from their bodies fly,— 220
 'They fled to bliss or woe!
 And every soul, it passed me by,
 Like the whiz of my cross-bow!'

PART IV.

'I fear thee ancient Mariner!
 I fear thy skinny hand! 225
 And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
 As is the ribbed sea-sand.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
 And thy skinny hand so brown.'—
 'Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest! 230
 This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
 Alone on a wide wide sea!
 And never a saint took pity on
 My soul in agony. 235

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

I looked upon the rotting sea, 240
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht, 245
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and
the sky 250
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me 255
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye! 260
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide :
Softly she was going up, 265
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread ;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt away 270
A sti'l and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes ;
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light 275
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam ; and every track 280
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware : 285
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The selfsame moment I could pray :
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank 290
Like lead into the sea.

PART V.

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven, 295
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained. 300

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs: 305
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere." 310

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To' and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out, 315
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge;
 And the rain poured down from one black
 cloud 320

The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
 The Moon was at its side:
 Like waters shot from some high crag,
 The lightning fell with never a jag, 325
 A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,
 Yet now the ship moved on!
 Beneath the lightning and the Moon
 The dead men gave a groan. 330

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
 Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
 It had been strange even in a dream,
 To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on; 335
 Yet never a breeze up blew;
 The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
 Where they were wont to do;
 They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
 We were a ghastly crew. 340

The body of my brother's son
 Stood by me, knee to knee:
 The body and I pulled at one rope,
 But he said nought to me.'

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!' 345
 'Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!

'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corpses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned—they dropped their
arms 350

And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun; 355
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are, 360
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song 365
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June, 370
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship, 375
Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go. 380
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir, 385
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then, like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound: 390
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned, 395
I heard and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low 400
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.' 405

Fly, brother, fly ! more high, more high !
 Or we shall be belated :
 For slow and slow that ship will go,
 When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

I woke, and we were sailing on 430
 As in a gentle weather :
 'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high ;
 The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
 For a charnel-dungeon fitter : 435
 All fixed on me their stony eyes,
 That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
 Had never passed away :
 I could not draw my eyes from theirs, 440
 Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapt : once more
 I viewed the ocean green,
 And looked far forth, yet little saw
 Of what had else been seen— 445

Like one, that on a lonesome road
 Doth walk in fear and dread,
 And having once turned round walks on,
 And turns no more his head ;
 Because he knows, a frightful fiend 450
 Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
 Nor sound nor motion made :
 Its path was not upon the sea,
 In ripple or in shade. 455

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship, 460
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed? 465
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God! 470
Or let me sleep away.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon. 475

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock

And the bay was white with silent light 480
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

A little distance from the prow
 Those crimson shadows were : 485
 I turned my eyes upon the deck—
 Oh, Christ ! what saw I there !

Each corse, lay flat, lifeless and flat,
 And by the holy rood !
 A man all light, a seraph-man, 490
 On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
 It was a heavenly sight !
 They stood as signals to the land,
 Each one a lovely light ; 495

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
 No voice did they impart—
 No voice ; but Oh ! the silence sank
 Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars, 500
 I heard the Pilot's cheer ;
 My head was turned perforce away,
 And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
 I heard them coming fast : 505
 Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy
 The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice :
 It is the Hermit good !
 He singeth loud his godly hymns 510
 That he makes in the wood.
 He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
 The Albatross's blood.

PART VII.

This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea. 515
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump : 520
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared : I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair, 525
That signal made but now?'

'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks looked warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere! 530
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow, 535
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)

I am a-feared'—'Push on, Push on!' 540
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard, 545

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound, 550
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found

Within the Pilot's boat. 555
Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked 560
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go, 565
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all' in my own countree, 570
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

'O shrive me, shrive me, holy man!'
The Hermit crossed his brow. 575
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woeful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale; 580
And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns. 585

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach. 590

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The Wedding-Guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell, 595
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O, Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea:

So lonely 'twas, that God' Himself
Scarce seemed there to be. 600

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk, 605
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell 610
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best 615
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.'

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest 620
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn. 625

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

THERE WAS A BOY

There was a boy ; ye knew him well, ye cliffs
And islands of Winander ! Many a time,
At evening, when the earliest stars began
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone, 5
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake ;
And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls, 10
That they might answer him. And they would shout
Across the watery vale, and shout again,
Responsive to his call, with quivering peals,
And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse wild 15
Of jocund din ! And, when there came a pause
Of silence such as baffled his best skill :
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice , 20
Of mountain torrents ; or the visible scene
Would enter unawares into his mind
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received
Into the bosom of the steady lake. 25

This boy was taken from his mates, and died
 In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.
 Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale
 Where he was born and bred: the churchyard hangs
 Upon a slope above the village school : 30
 And through that churchyard when my way has led
 On summer evenings, I believe, that there
 A long half-hour together I have stood
 Mute, looking at the grave in which he lies !

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

Behold her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland lass !
 Reaping and singing by herself ;
 Stop here, or gently pass !
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain, 5
 And sings a melancholy strain ;
 O listen ! for the vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
 More welcome notes to weary bands 10
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands :
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
 In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas 15
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow

For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago : 20
 Or is it some more humble lay,
 Familiar matter of to-day?
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
 That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang 25
 As if her song could have no ending;
 I saw her singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending;—
 I listened, motionless and still;
 And, as I mounted up the hill, 30
 The music in my heart I bore
 Long after it was heard no more.

THE DAFFODILS.

I wandered lonely as a cloud
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
 When all at once I saw a crowd,
 A host of golden daffodils;
 Beside the lake, beneath the trees, 5
 Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
 And twinkle on the milky way,
 They stretched in never-ending line
 Along the margin of a bay : 10
 Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
 Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
 A poet could not but be gay, 15
 In such a jocund company!
 I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
 What wealth the show to me had brought;

For oft, when on my couch I lie
 In vacant or in pensive mood, 20
 They flash upon that inward eye
 Which is the bliss of solitude;
 And then my heart with pleasure fills,
 And dances with the daffodils.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802.

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
 For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
 To think that now our life is only drest
 For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
 Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook 5
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:
 The wealthiest man among us is the best:
 No grandeur now in nature or in book
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
 This is idolatry; and these we adore: 10
 Plain living and high thinking are no more:
 The homely beauty of the good old cause
 Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

ODE TO DUTY.

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law 5
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth, 10
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot;
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Oh! if through confidence misplaced 15
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around
them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security. 20
And they a blissful course may hold
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried, 25
No sport of every random gust,

Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust :
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred 30
The task, in smoother walks to stray ;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control ; 35
But in the quietness of thought :
Me this unchartered freedom tires ;
I feel the weight of chance-desires :
My hopes no more must change their name ;
I long for a repose that ever is the same. 40

Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face :
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds, 45
And fragrance in thy footing treads ;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are
fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power !
I call thee : I myself commend 50
Unto thy guidance from this hour ;
Oh, let my weakness have an end !
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
The confidence of reason give ; 55
And in the light of truth thy bondman let me live !

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death :
The reason firm, the temperate will, 25
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel-light. 30

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
 Hangs a thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years :
 Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
 In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment ; what ails her? She sees 5
 A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ;
 Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
 And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale
 Down which she so often has tripped with her pail ; 10
 And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
 The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven : but they fade,
 The mist and the river, the hill and the shade ;
 The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise, 15
 And the colours have all passed away from her eyes!

STEPPING WESTWARD.

"What, you are stepping westward?"—"Yea."
 —'Twould be a *wildish* destiny
 If we, who thus together roam
 In a strange land, and far from home,
 Where in this place the guests of Chance : 5
 Yet who would stop or fear to advance,
 Though home or shelter he had none,
 With such a Sky to lead him on?

The dewy ground was dark and cold;
 Behind, all gloomy to behold ; 10
 And stepping westward seemed to be
 A kind of heavenly destiny :
 I liked the greeting: 'twas a sound
 Of something without place or bound ;
 And seemed to give me spiritual right 15
 'To travel through that region bright.

 The voice was soft, and she who spake
 Was walking by her native lake :
 'The salutation had to me
 'The very sound of courtesy : 20
 Its power was felt ; and while my eye
 Was fixed upon the glowing sky,
 The echo of the voice enwrought
 A human sweetness with the thought
 Of travelling through the world that lay 25
 Before me in my endless way.

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
 Beside the springs of Dove ;
 A maid whom there were none to praise,
 And very few to love ;

 A violet by a mossy stone 5
 Half-hidden from the eye !
 —Fair as a star, when only one
 Is shining in the sky.

 She lived unknown, and few could know
 When Lucy ceased to be ; 10
 But she is in her grave, and, oh,
 The difference to me !

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

SOUND SOUND THE CLARION

Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
To all the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.

BRIGNALL BANKS.

O, Brignall banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there,
Would grace a summer queen.
And as I rode by Dalton-hall, 5
Beneath the turrets high,
A Maiden on the castle-wall
Was singing merrily,—
'O Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green; 10
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen'.

'If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead'we, 15
That dwell by dale and down.

And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed
As blithe as Queen of May'. 20
Yet sung she, 'Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove 'with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen.

'I read you, by your bugle-horn 25
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn
To keep the king's greenwood'.
'A Ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light; 30
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night'.—
Yet sung she 'Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there 35
To reign his Queen of May!

'With burnish'd brand and musketoon,
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold dragoon
That lists the tuck of drum'. 40
'I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear,
But when the beetle sounds his hum
My comrades take the spear.
And O! though Brignall banks be fair 45
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare
Would reign my Queen of May!

'Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
 A nameless death I'll die; 50
 The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
 Were better mate than I!
 And when I'm with my comrades met
 Beneath the greenwood bough,
 What once we were we ail forget, 55
 Nor think what we are now'.
 'Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
 And Greta woods are green,
 And you may gather garlands there
 Would grace a summer-queen'. 60

COUNTY GUY.

Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
 The sun has left the lea,
 The orange-flower perfumes the bower,
 The breeze is on the sea.
 The lark, his lay who trill'd all day, 5
 Sits hush'd his partner nigh;
 Breeze, bird and flower confess the hour,
 But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through the shade
 Her shepherd's suit to hear; 10
 To Beauty shy, by lattice high,
 Sings high-born Cavalier.
 The star of Love, all stars above,
 Now reigns o'er earth and sky;
 And high and low the influence know— 15
 But where is County Guy?

THE LAST MINSTREL.

The way was long, the wind was cold,
The Minstrel was infirm and old;
His wither'd cheek, and tresses grey,
Seem'd to have known a better day;
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy.
The last of all the Bards was he,
Who sung of Border chivalry;
For, welladay! their date was fled,
His tuneful brethren all were dead;
And he, neglected and oppress'd,
Wish'd to be with them, and at rest.
No more on prancing palfrey borne,
He carolled light as lark at morn;
No longer courted and caress'd,
High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
He pour'd, to lord and lady gay,
The unpremeditated lay:
Old times were changed, old manners gone:
A stranger filled the Stuarts' throne;
The bigots of the iron time
Had call'd his harmless art a crime.
A wandering Harper, scorn'd and poor,
He begg'd his bread from door to door
And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,
The harp a king had loved to hear.
He pass'd where Newark's stately tower
Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower:
The Minstrel gazed with wishful eye
No humbler resting-place was nigh:

With hesitating step at last,
The embattled portal arch he pass'd,
Whose ponderous grate and massy bar
Had oft roll'd back the tide of war,
But never closed the iron door 35
Against the desolate and poor.
The Duchess mark'd his weary pace,
His timid mien, and reverend face,
And bade her page the menials tell
That they should tend the old man well : 40
For she had known adversity,
Though born in such a high degree ;
In pride of power, in beauty's bloom,
Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb !

When kindness had his wants supplied, 45
And the old man was gratified,
Began to rise his Minstrel pride ;
And he began to talk anon,
Of good Earl Francis, dead and gone,
And of Earl Walter, rest him, God ! 50
A braver ne'er to battle rode ;
And how full many a tale he knew
Of the old warriors of Buccleuch ;
And, would the noble Duchess deign
To listen to an old man's strain, 55
Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak,
He thought even yet, the sooth to speak,
That, if she loved the harp to hear,
He could make music to her ear.
The humble boon was soon obtain'd ; 60
The aged Minstrel audience gain'd.
But, when he reach'd the room of state,
Where she, with all her ladies, sate,

Perchance he wish'd his boon denied :
For, when to tune his harp he tried, 65
His trembling hand had lost the ease
Which marks security to please ;
And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,
Came wildering o'er his aged brain—
He tried to tune his harp in vain ! 70
The pitying Duchess praised its chime,
And gave him heart, and gave him time,
Till every string's according glee
Was blended into harmony.
And then, he said, he would full fain 75
He could recall an ancient strain,
He never thought to sing again.
It was not framed for village churls,
But for high dames and mighty earls ;
He had play'd it to King³ Charles the good, 80
When he kept court in Holyrood ;
And much he wish'd, yet fear'd, to try
The long-forgotten melody.

Amid the strings his finger stray'd,
And an uncertain warbling made, 85
And oft he shook his hoary head.
But when he caught the measure wild,
The old man raised his face and smiled ;
And lighten'd up his faded eye,
With all a poet's ecstacy ! 90
In varying cadence, soft or strong,
He swept the sounding chords along :
The present scene, the future lot,
His toils, his wants, were all forgot ;
Cold diffidence, and age's frost, 95
In the full tide of song were lost ;

Each blank in faithless memory void,
 The poet's glowing thought supplied:
 And, while his harp responsive rung,
 'Twas thus the Latest Minstrel sung.

100

PROUD MAISIE.

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
 Walking so early;
 Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
 Singing so rarely.

'Tell me, thou bonny bird,
 When shall I marry me?'
 —'When six braw gentlemen
 Kirkward shall carry ye.'

5

'Who makes the bridal bed,
 Birdie, say truly?'
 —'The grey-headed sexton
 That delves the grave duly.

10

'The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
 Shall light thee steady;
 The owl from the steeple sing
 Welcome, proud lady.'

15

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

THE SCHOLAR.

My days among the Dead are past;
 Around me I behold,
 Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
 The mighty minds of old:
 My never-failing friends are they,
 With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe, 10
My cheeks have often been bedew'd
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the Dead ; with them
I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn, 15
Partake their hopes and fears ;
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the Dead; anon
 My place with them will be, 20
 And I with them shall travel on
 Through all futurity;
 Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
 That will not perish in the dust.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

ROSE AYLMER.

Ah! what avails the sceptered race!
Ah! what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and sighs
I consecrate to thee.

ON HIMSELF.

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife ;
Nature I loved, and, next to Nature, Art ;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life ;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.

TO NIGHT.

Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?

Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew, 5
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! Creation widened in man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find, 10
Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind!
Why do we then shun death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

Of Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone; 5
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat 10
Lay their bulwarks on the brine,
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:
It was ten of April morn by the chime:
As they drifted on their path 15
There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

But the might of England flush'd
To anticipate the scene; 20
And her van the fleetest rush'd
O'er the deadly space between:
'Hearts of oak!' our captains cried, when each gun

From its adamantine lips
 Spread a death-shade round the ships, 25
 Like the hurricane eclipse
 Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
 And the havoc did not slack,
 Till a feeble cheer the Dane 30
 To our cheering sent us back;—
 Their shots along the deep slowly boom;—
 Then ceased—and all is wail,
 As they strike the shatter'd sail,
 Or in conflagration pale 35
 Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then
 As he hail'd them o'er the wave:
 'Ye are brothers! ye are men!
 And we conquer but no save:— 40
 So peace instead of death let us bring:
 But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
 With the crews, at England's feet,
 And make submission meet
 To our King.' 45

Then Denmark blessed our chief
 That he gave her wounds repose;
 And the sounds of joy and grief
 From her people wildly rose,
 As death withdrew his shades from the day: 50
 While the sun look'd smiling bright
 O'er a wide and woeful sight,
 Where the fires of funeral light
 Died away.

- Now joy, old England, raise ! 55
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light !
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep 60
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore !
- Brave hearts ! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true, 65
On the deck of fame that died,
With the gallant good Riou :
Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave !
While the billow mournful rolls
And the mermaid's song condoles 70
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave !

THOMAS MOORE.

PRO PATRIA MORI.

When he who adores thee has left but the name
Of his fault and his sorrows behind,
Oh! say wilt thou weep, when they darken the fame
Of a life that for thee was resign'd!
Yes, weep, and however my foes may condemn, 5
Thy tears shall efface their decree;
For, Heaven can witness, though guilty to them,
I have been but too faithful to thee.

With thee were the dreams of my earliest love;
Every thought of my reason was thine: 10
In my last humble prayer to the Spirit above
Thy name shall be mingled with mine!
Oh! blest are the lovers and friends who shall live
The days of thy glory to see;
But the next dearest blessing that Heaven can give 15
Is the pride of thus dying for thee.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

A WET SHEET AND A FLOWING SEA

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys, 5
While like the eagle free
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

O for a soft and gentle wind!
I heard a fair one cry; 10
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home, 15
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornéd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
But hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud; 20
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

GEORGE GORDON NOEL BYRON.

VENICE.

(FROM CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE, CANTO IV.)

I.

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs ;
A palace and a prison on each hand :
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand 5
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles !

II.

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean, 10
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers :
And such she was ;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East 15
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

III.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
 And silent rows the songless gondolier; 20
 Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
 And music meets not always now the ear:
 Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.
 States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die.
 Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear, 25
 The pleasant place of all festivity,
 The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

IV.

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
 Her name in story, and her long array
 Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond 30
 Above the Dogeless city's vanish'd sway;
 Ours is a trophy which will not decay
 With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,
 And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn away—
 The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er, 35
 For us repeopled were the solitary shore.....

XI.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;
 And, annual marriage now no more renew'd,
 The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
 Neglected garment of her widowhood! 40
 St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood
 Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,
 Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,
 And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
 When Venice was a queen with an unequal'd dower. 45

XII.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns—
An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt;
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt
From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt 50
The sunshine for a while, and downward go
Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt;
O for one hour of blind old Dandolo!
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

ON THE CASTLE OF CHILLON.

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of Thee alone can bind;

And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd, 5
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Chillon! thy prison is a holy place
And thy sad floor an altar, for 'twas trod, 10
Until his very steps have left a trace

Worn as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God,

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

TO A SKYLARK.

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art. 5

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest,
Like a cloud of fire,
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest. 10

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun. 15

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight: 20

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,

Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there. 25

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
'The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflow'd. 30

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody;— 35

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not : 40

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower : 45

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it
from the view : 50

Like a rose embower'd
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflower'd
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingéd
thieves. 55

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awaken'd flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass. 60

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine :
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine. 65

Chorus hymeneal
Or triumphal chaunt
Match'd with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want. 70

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? What ignorance of
pain? 75

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be :

Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee :
Thou lovest ; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety. 80

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream? 85

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not :
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught ;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought. 90

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear ;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near. 95

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground! 100

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now! 105

OZYMANDIAS OF EGYPT.

I met a traveller from an antique land
 Who said: 'Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
 Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
 Half sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, whose frown
 And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command 5
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
 Which yet survive, stamp'd on these lifeless things,
 The hand that mock'd them and the heart that fed;
 And on the pedestal these words appear:
 'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: 10
 Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
 The lone and level sands stretch far away.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND.

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
 Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou 5
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
 The wingéd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until
 Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow
 Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill 10
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
 With living hues and odours plain and hill:
 Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
 Destroyer and Preserver; hear, O hear!

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion, 15
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,
Angels of rain and lightning! There are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head 20
Of some fierce Mænad, ev'n from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre, 25
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: O hear!

Thou who didst waken from his summer-dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay, 30
Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams,
Beside a pumice isle in Baïæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers 35
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know 40
Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear
And tremble and despoil themselves: O hear!

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share 45
The impulse of thy strength, only less free

Than Thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed 50
Scarce seem'd a vision,—I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bow'd 55
One too like thee—tameless, and swift, and proud.

Make me thy lyre, ev'n as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep autumnal tone, 60
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like wither'd leaves, to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse, 65
Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawaken'd earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind? 70

MUSIC WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead, 5
Are heap'd for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when Thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

JOHN KEATS.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot, 5
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-wingéd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease. 10

O, for a draught of vintage, that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delv'd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
Dance, and Provencal song, and sunburnt mirth !
O for a beaker full of the warm South, 15
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainéd mouth ;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim : 20

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs, 25
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow. 30

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night, 35
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy
ways. 40

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalm'd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild; 45
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves. 50

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with careful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mus'd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath; .

Now more than ever seems it rich to die, 55
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod. 60

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path 65
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fabled to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades 75
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep? 80

TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG IN CITY PENT

To one who has been long in city pent,
 'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
 And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer
 Full in the smile of the blue firmament.

Who is more happy, when, with heart's content, 5
 Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant⁹ lair
 Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair
 And gentle tale of love and languishment?

Returning home at evening, with an ear
 Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye 10
 Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,

He mourns that day so soon has glided by :
 E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
 That falls through the clear ether silently.

WHEN I HAVE FEARS THAT I MAY CEASE TO BE

When I have fears that I may cease to be
 Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,
 Before high-piléd books, in charact'ry
 Hold like rich garners the full-ripen'd grain;

When I behold, upon the night's starred face, 5
 Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
 And think that I may never live to trace
 Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance :

And when I feel, fair Creature' of an hour!
 That I shall never look upon thee more, 10
 Never have relish in the faery power
 Of unreflecting love—then on the shore

Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
 Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI.

'O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
 Alone and palely loitering?
 The sedge has wither'd from the lake,
 And no birds sing.

'O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms! 5
 So haggard and so woe-begone?
 The squirrel's granary is full,
 And the harvest's done.

'I see a lily on thy brow
 With anguish moist and fever-dew, 10
 And on thy cheeks a fading rose
 Fast withereth too.'

'I met a lady in the meads,
 Full beautiful—a faery's child,
 Her hair was long, her foot was light, 15
 And her eyes were wild.

'I made a garland for her head,
 And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
 She look'd at me as she did love,
 And made sweet moan. 20

'I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

'She found me roots of relish sweet, 25
And honey wild and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said,
'I love thee true'.

'She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sigh'd full sore; 30
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

'And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dream'd—ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dream'd 35
On the cold hill's side.

'I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all:
They cried—"La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!" 40

'I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gapéd wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill's side.

'And this is why I sojourn here 45
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.'

THOMAS HOOD.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

One more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly, 5
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements; 10
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully; 15
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her—
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly. 20

Make no deep scrutiny
 Into her mutiny
 Rash and undutiful:
 Past all dishonour,
 Death has left on her
 Only the beautiful. 25

Still, for all slips of hers,
 One of Eve's family—
 Wipe those poor lips of hers'
 Oozing so clammyly. 30

Loop up her tresses
 Escaped from the comb,
 Her fair auburn tresses;
 Whilst wonderment guesses
 Where was her home? 35

Who was her father?
 Who was her mother?
 Had she a sister?
 Had she a brother?
 Or was there a dearer one 40
 Still, and a nearer one
 Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
 Of Christian charity
 Under the sun! 45
 Oh! it was pitiful!
 Near a whole cityfull,
 Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
 Fatherly, motherly 50
 Feelings had changed :
 Love, by harsh evidence,
 Thrown from its eminence ;
 Even God's providence
 Seeming estranged. 55

Where the lamps quiver
 So far in the river,
 With many a light
 From window and casement,
 From garret to basement, 60
 She stood, with amazement,
 Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
 Made her tremble and shiver ;
 But not the dark arch, 65
 Or the black flowing river :
 Mad from life's history,
 Glad to death's mystery,
 Swift to be hurl'd—
 Anywhere, anywhere 70
 Out of the world !

In she plunged boldly,
 No matter how coldly
 Thæt rough river ran,—
 Over the brink of it, 75
 Picture it—think of it,
 Dissolute Man !
 Lave in it, drink of it,
 Then, if you can !

Take her up tenderly, 80
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly, 85
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them,
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring 90
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily, 95
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.

—Cross her hands humbly 100
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness, 105
Her sins to her Saviour.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

What was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat 5
With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay, 10
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sat the great god Pan,
While turbidly flow'd the river;
And hack'd and hew'd as a great god can 15
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of the leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it skort, did the great god Pan,
(How tall it stood in the river!) 20
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notch'd the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sat by the river.

'This is the way,' laugh'd the great god Pan, 25
 (Laugh'd while he sat by the river,)
'The only way, since gods began
'To make sweet music, they could succeed.'
'Then dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
 He blew in power by the river. 30

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
 Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
'The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly 35
 Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
 To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
'The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,— 40
For the reed which grows never more again
 As a reed with the reeds in the river.

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON.

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea ;
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonesse about their Lord,
King Arthur : then, because his wound was deep, 5
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land. 10
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights 15
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls 20
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
'Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm 25
That without help I cannot last till morn.

Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake, 30
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king:
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known: 35
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus, 40
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word.

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept 45
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock, 50
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt: 55
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind, 60

In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
 Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
 There in the many-knotted waterflags,
 That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
 So strode he back slow to the wounded King. 65

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
 'Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?
 What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
 'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds, 70
 And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale :
 'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
 Not rendering true answer, as besem'd
 Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight : 75
 For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
 Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
 'This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
 Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
 As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing 80
 I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
 Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
 Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought ;
 But when he saw the wonder of the hilt, 85
 How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
 His palms together, and he cried aloud,

'And if indeed I cast the brand away,
 Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
 Should thus be lost for ever from the earth, 90
 Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
 What good should follow this, if this were done?
 What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
 Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand 95
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? but were this kept, 100
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps 105
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
'To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost.'
So spake he, clouded with his own conceit, 110
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere: 115
'I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'
To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me! 120
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all, 125
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence : 130
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among he bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword, 135
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn, .
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock 140
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him 145
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :
'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or seen?' 150

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men, 155
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him 160
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.'

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :

'My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear 165
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die'.

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere 170
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs. 175

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, 'Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die.' 180
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.

He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad. 185
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels— 190
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware 195
That all the decks were dense with stately forms

Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
 Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them
 rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
 And, as it were one voice, an agony 200
 Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
 All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
 Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in the barge',
 And to the 'barge they came. There those three
 Queens 205

Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
 But she, that rose the tallest of them all
 And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
 And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
 And call'd him by his name, complaining loud, 210
 And dropping bitter tears against his brow
 Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
 And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
 Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
 And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops 215
 Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—
 That made his forehead like a rising sun
 High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust;
 Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
 Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed
 his lips. 220

So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
 Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
 From spur to plume a star of tournament,
 Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
 Before the eyes of ladies and of kings. 225

'Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
 'Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?

Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
 For now I see the true old times are dead,
 When every morning brought a noble chance, 230
 And every chance brought out a noble knight.
 Such times have been not since the light that led
 The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
 But now the whole—ROUND TABLE is dissolved
 Which was an image of the mighty world; 235
 And I, the last, go forth companionless,
 And the days darken round me, and the years,
 Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
 'The old order changeth, yielding place to new, 240
 And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
 Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
 Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
 I have lived my life, and that which I have done
 May He within Himself make pure! but thou, 245
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or goats 250
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God. 255
 But now farewell. I am going a long way
 With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
 (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
 To the island-valley of Avilion;
 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, 260
 Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies

Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with 'orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail 265
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death, ,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull 270
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

ULYSSES.

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me. 5
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades 10
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all; 15
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'

Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades 20
For ever and for ever when I move.

How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me 25

Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire 30
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil 35
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere.
Of common duties, decent not to fail 40
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners, 45
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought
with me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil; 50
Death closes all; but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,

Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :
The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs :
the deep 55
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows ; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths 60
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
'Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and tho' 65
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven ; that which we are, we are ;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield. 70

ROBERT BROWNING.

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP.

I.

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon :
A mile or so away
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming-day ;
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how, 5
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

II.

Just as perhaps he mused, "My plans
That soar, to earth may fall, 10
Let once my army-leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall,——"
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew 15
Until he reached the mound.

III.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy :
You hardly could suspect— 20

(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
 Scarce any blood came thro')
 You looked twice ere you saw his breast
 Was all but shot in two.

IV.

"Well", cried he, "Emperor, by God's grace 25
 We've got you Ratisbon!
 The Marshal's in the market-place,
 And you'll be there anon
 To see your flag-bird flap his vans
 Where I, to heart's desire, 30
 Perched him!" The Chief's eye flashed; his
 plans
 Soared up again like fire.

V.

The Chief's eye flashed; but presently
 Softened itself, as sheathes
 A film the mother eagle's eye 35
 When her bruised eaglet breathes:
 "You're wounded!" "Nay," his soldier's pride
 Touched to the quick, he said:
 "I'm killed, Sire!" And, his Chief beside,
 Smiling, the boy fell dead. 40

MEETING AT NIGHT.

I.

The grey sea and the long black land;
 And the yellow half-moon large and low;
 And the startled little waves that leap
 In fiery ringlets from their sleep,

As I gain the cove with pushing prow, 5
 And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

II.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach ;
 Three fields to cross till a farm appears ;
 A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
 And blue spurt of a lighted match, 10
 And a voice less loud, through joys and fears,
 Then the two hearts beating each to each !

PARTING AT MORNING.

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
 And the sun looked over the mountain's rim :
 And straight was a path of gold for him, 15
 And the need of a world of men for me.

MULFYKEH.*

If a stranger passed the tent of Hóseyn, he cried
 'A churl's !'
 Or haply 'God help the man who has neither salt
 nor bread !'
 —'Nay', would a friend exclaim, 'he needs nor pity
 nor scorn
 More than who spends small thought on the shore-sand,
 picking pearls,
 —Holds but in light esteem the seed-sort, bears instead 5
 On his breast a moon-like prize, some orb which of night
 makes morn.

*By kind permission of Messrs. John Murray, London.

'What if no flocks and herds enrich the son of Sinan?
They went when his tribe was mulct, ten thousand camels
the due,

Blood-value paid perforce for a murder done of old.

"God gave them, let them go! But never since time
began, 10

Mulékékh, peerless mare, owned master the match of you,
And you are my prize, my Pearl: I laugh at men's land
and gold!"

'So in the pride of his soul laughs Hóseyn—and right,
I say.

Do the ten steeds run a race of glory? Outstripping all,
Ever Mulékékh stands first steed at the victor's staff. 15

Who started, the owner's hope, gets shamed and named,
that day.

"Silence," or, last but one, is "The Cuffed", as we use
to call

Whom the paddock's lord thrusts forth. Right, Hóseyn, I
say, to laugh!"

'Boasts he Mulékékh the Pearl?' the stranger replies:
'Be sure

On him I waste nor scorn nor pity, but lavish both 20

On Duhl the son of Sheybán, who withers away in heart

For envy of Heséyn's luck. Such sickness admits no cure.

A certain poet has sung, and sealed the same with an oath,

"For the vulgar—flocks and herds! The Pearl is a prize
apart".'

Lo, Duhl the son of Sheybán comes riding to Hóseyn's
tent 25

And he casts his saddle down, and enters and 'Peace!'
bids he.

You are poor, I know the cause: my plenty shall mend
the wrong.

'Tis said of your Pearl—the price of a hundred camels
spent

In her purchase were scarce ill paid; such prudence is far
from me

Who proffer a thousand. Speak! Long parley may last
too long'. 30

Said Hóseyn 'You feed young beasts a many, of famous
breed,

Slit-eared, unblemished, fat, true offspring of Múzennem:
There stumbles no weak-eyed she in the line as it climbs
the hill.

But I love Muléykeh's face: her forefront whitens indeed
Like a yellowish wave's cream-crest. Your camels—go
gaze on them! 35

Her fetlock is foam-splashed too. Myself am the richer
still.'

A year goes by: lo, back to the tent again rides Duhl.

'You are open-hearted, ay, moist-handed, a very prince.

Why should I speak of sale? Be the mare your simple
gift!

My son is pined to death for her beauty: my wife prompts
'Fool, 40

Beg for his sake the Pearl! Be God the rewarder, since
God pays debts seven for one: who squanders on Him
shows thrift''.'

Said Hóseyn 'God gives each man one life, like a lamp,
then gives

That lamp due measure of oil: lamp lighted—hold high,
wave wide

Its comfort for others to share ! once quench it, what help
is left? 45

The oil of your lamp is your son : I shine while Muléykeh
lives.

Would I beg your son to cheer my dark if Muléykeh died?
It is life against life : what good avails to the life-bereft ?

Another year, and—hist ! What craft is it Duhl designs?
He alights not at the door of the tent as he did last time 50
But, creeping behind, he gropes his stealthy way by the
trench

Half-round till he finds the flap in the folding, for night
combines

With the robber—and such is he : Duhl, covetous up to
crime,

Must wring from Hósey¹n's grasp the Pearl, by whatever
the wrench.

'He was hunger-bitten, I heard : I tempted with half my
store, 55

And a gibe was all my thanks. Is he generous like
Spring dew?

Account the fault to me who chattered with such an one !
He has killed, to feast chance comers, the creature he rode :
nay, more—

For a couple of singing-girls his robe has he torn in two :
I will beg ! Yet ¹ nowise gained by the tale of my wife
and son. 60

'I swear by the Holy House, my head will I never wash
Till I filch his Pearl away. Fair dealing I tried, then
• guile,

And now I resort to force. He said we must live or die :

Let him die, then,—let me live! Be bold—but not too rash!

I have found me a peeping-place: breast, bury your breathing while 65

I explore for myself! Now, breath! He deceived me not, the spy!

'As he said—there lies in peace Hóseyn--how happy! Beside

Stands tethered the Pearl: thrice winds' her headstall about his wrist:

'Tis therefore he sleeps so sound—the moon through the roof reveals.

And, loose on his left, stands too that other, known far and wide, 70

Buhéyseh, her sister born: fleet is she yet ever missed
The winning tail's fire-flash a-stream past the thunderous heels.

'No less she stands saddled and bridled, this second, in case some thief

Should enter and seize and fly with the first, as I mean to do.

What then? The Pearl is the Pearl: once mount her we both escape? 75

Through the skirt-fold in glides Duhl,—so a serpent disturbs no leaf

In a bush as he parts the twigs entwining a nest: clean through,

He is noiselessly at his work: as he planned, he performs the rape.

He has set the tent-door wide, has buckled the girth, has clipped

The headstall away from the wrist he leaves thrice bound
as before, 80

He springs on the Pearl, is launched on the desert like
bolt from bow.

Up starts our plundered man: from his breast though
the heart be ripped,

Yet his mind has the mastery: behold, in a minute more,
He is out and off and away on Buhéyseh, whose worth we
know!

And Hóseyⁿ—his blood turns flame, he has learned long
since to ride, 85

And Buhéyseh does her part,—they gain—they are gaining
fast

On the fugitive pair, and Duhl has Ed-Dárraj to cross and
quit,

And to reach the ridge El-Sabán,—no safety till that be
spied!

And Buhéyseh is, bound by bound, but a horse-length
off at last,

For the Pearl has missed the tap of the heel, the touch
of the bit. 90

She shortens her stride, she chafes at her rider the strange
and queer:

Buhéyseh is mad with hope—beat sister she shall and
must

Though Duhl, of the hand and heel so clumsy, she has
to thank.

She is near now, nose by tail—they are neck by croup—
joy! fear!

What folly makes Hóseyⁿ shout 'Dog Duhl, Damned son
of the Dust, 95

Tough the right ear and press with your foot my Pearl's
left flank!

And Duhl was wise at the word, and Muléykeh as prompt
perceived

Who was urging redoubled pace, and to hear him was
to obey,

And a leap indeed gave she, and vanished for evermore.

And Hóseyn looked one long last look as who, all
bereaved, 100

Looks, fain to follow the dead so far as the living
may :

Then he turned Ruhéyseh's neck slow homeward,
weeping sore.

And, lo, in the sunrise, still sat Hóseyn upon the ground
Weeping : and neighbours came, the tribesmen of Bénu-
Asád

In the vale of green I'r-Rass, and they questioned him
of his grief ; 105

And he told from first to last how, surpentine-like, Duhl had
wound

His way to the nest, and how Duhl rode like an ape, so
bad !

And how Buhéyseh did wonders, yet Pearl remained with
the thief.

And they jeered him, one and all : 'Poor Hóseyn is crazed
past hope !

How else had he wrought himself his ruin, in fortune's
spite ? 110

To have simply held the tongue were a task for a boy or
girl,

And here were Muléykeh again, the eyed like an antelope,
The child of his heart by day, the wife of his breast by
night !'—

'And the beaten in speed !', wept Hóseyn : 'You never have
loved my Pearl'.

THE LOST LEADER.

I.

Just for a handful of silver he left us,
 Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
 Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
 Lost all the others she lets us devote;
 They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver, 5
 So much was theirs who so little allowed :
 How all our copper had gone for his service !
 Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud !
 We that had loved him so, followed him, honoured
 him,
 Lived in his mild and 'magnificent eye, 10
 Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
 Made him our pattern to live and to die !
 Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
 Burns, 'Shelley, were with us,—they watch from
 their graves !
 He alone breaks from the van and the freemen, 15
 He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves !

II.

We shall march prospering,—not thro' his presence ;
 Songs may inspire us,—not from his lyre ;
 Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
 Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire : 20
 Blot out his name, then,—record one lost soul more,
 One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
 One more triumph for devils, and sorrow for angels,
 One wrong more to man, one more insult to God !

Life's night begins: let him never come back to us! 25
 There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
 Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
 Never glad confident morning again!
 Best fight on well, for we taught him,—strike gallantly,
 Aim at our heart ere we pierce through his own; 30
 Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
 Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

THE BOY AND THE ANGEL.

Morning, evening, noon, and night,
 "Praise God," sang Theocrite.
 Then to his poor trade he turned,
 By which the daily meal was earned.
 Hard he laboured, long and well; 5
 O'er his work the boy's curls fell:
 But ever, at each period,
 He stopped and sang, "Praise God."
 Then back again his curls he threw,
 And cheerful turned to work anew. 10
 Said Blaise, the listening monk, "Well done;
 I doubt not thou art heard, my son:
 "As well as if thy voice to-day
 Were praising God, the Pope's great way.
 "This Easter Day, the Pope at Rome 15
 Praises God from Peter's dome".
 Said Theocrite, "Would God that I
 Might praise Him, that great way, and die!"
 Night passed, day shone,
 And Theocrite was gone. 20

With God a day endures alway,
A thousand years are but a day.

God said in Heaven, "Nor day nor night
Now brings the voice of my delight".

Then Gabriel, like a rainbow's birth, 25
Spread his wings and sank to earth;

Entered in flesh, the empty cell,
Lived there, and played the craftsman well:

And morning, evening, noon, and night,
Praised God in place of Theocrite. 30

And from a boy, to youth he grew:
The man put off the stripling's hue:

The man matured and fell away
Into the season of decay:

And ever o'er the trade he bent, 35
And ever lived on earth content.

(He did God's will; to him, all one
If on the earth or in the sun).

God said, "A praise is in mine ear;
There is no doubt in it, no fear: 40

"So sing old worlds, and so
New worlds that from my footstool go.

"Clearer loves sound other ways:
I miss my little human praise".

'Then forth sprang Gabriel's wings, off fell 45
The flesh disguise, remained the cell.

'Twas Easter Day: he flew to Rome,
And paused above Saint Peter's dome.

In the tiring-room close by
The great outer gallery, 50

With his holy vestments dight,
Stood the new Pope, Theocrite :
And all his past career
Came back upon him clear,
Since when, a boy, he plied his trade, 55
Till on his life the sickness weighed ;
And in his cell, when death drew near,
An angel in a dream brought cheer :
And rising from the sickness dream
He grew a priest, and now stood here. 60
To the East with praise he turned,
And on his sight the angel burned.
"I bore thee from thy craftsman's cell,
And set thee here ; I did not well.
"Vainly I left my angel's sphere, 65
Vain was thy dream of many a year.
"Thy voice's praise seemed weak ; it dropped—
Creation's chorus stopped !
"Go back and praise again
The early way—while I remain. 70
"With that weak voice of our disdain,
Take up Creation's pausing strain.
"Back to the cell and poor employ :
Become the craftsman and the boy !"
Theocrite grew old at home : 75
A new Pope dwelt in Peter's Dome.
One vanished as the other died :
They sought God side by side.

THE LABORATORY.

I.

Now that I, tying thy glass mask tightly,
May gaze thro' these faint smokes curling whitely,
As thou pliest thy trade in this devil's-smithy—
Which is the poison to poison her, prithee?

II.

He is with her, and they know that I know 5
Where they are, what they do : they believe my tears flow
While they laugh, laugh at me, at me fled to the drear
Empty church, to pray God in, for them!—I am here.

III.

Grind away, moisten and mash up thy paste,
Pound at thy powder,—I am not in haste! 10
Better sit thus and observe thy strange things,
Than go where men wait me, and dance at the King's.

IV.

That in the mortar—you call it a gum?
Ah, the brave tree whence such gold oozings come!
And yonder soft phial, the exquisite blue, 15
Sure to taste sweetly,—is that poison too?

V.

Had I but all of them, thee and thy treasures,
What a wild crowd of invisible pleasures!
To carry pure death in an earring, a casket,
A signet, a fan-mount, a filigree basket! 20

VI.

Soon, at the King's, a mere lozenge to give,
And Panline should have just thirty minutes to live!
But to light a pastile, and Elise, with her head,
And her breast, and her arms, and her hands, should drop
dead!

VII.

Quick—is it finished? The colour's too grim! 25
Why not soft like the phial's, enticing and dim?
Let it brighten her drink, let her turn it and stir,
And try it and taste, ere she fix and prefer!

VIII.

What a drop! she's not little, no minion like me!
That's why she ensnared him: this never will free 30
The soul from those masculine eyes,—say, "No!"
To that pulse's magnificent come-and-go.

IX.

For only last night, as they whispered, I brought
My own eyes to bear on her so, that I thought
Could I keep them one half minute, fixed she would
fall 35
Shriveled; she fell not; yet this does it all!

X.

Not that I bid you spare her the pain;
Let death be felt and the proof remain:
Brand, burn up, bite into its grace—
He is sure to remember her dying face! 40

XI.

It is done? Take my mask off! Nay, be not morose;
It kills her, and this prevents seeing it close:
'The delicate droplet, my whole fortune's fee!
If it hurts her, beside, can it ever hurt me?

XII.

Now, take all my jewels, gorge gold to your fill, 45
You may kiss me, old man, on my mouth if you will!
But brush this dust off me, lest horror it brings
Ere I know it—next moment I dance at the King's!

PROSPICE.

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm, 5
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall, 10
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and
forbore 15
And bade me creep past.

No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold. 20
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain, 25
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

SAY NOT, THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars ; 5
It may 'be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly, 15
But westward, look, the land is bright.

WALT WHITMAN.*

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we
sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all
exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim
and daring.

But O heart! heart! heart! 5
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the
bugle trills, 10
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you
the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager
faces turning;

Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck 15
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and
still,

*From *Leaves of Grass*. By kind permission of Messrs. Doubleday Page & Co., New York.

My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse, no
will,

The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed
and done,

From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with
object won.

20

Exult O shores, and ring O bells!

But I with mournful tread,

Walk the deck—my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

JOY! SHIPMATE—JOY!

Joy! shipmate—joy!

(Pleas'd to my soul at death I cry;)

Our life is closed—our life begins;

The long, long anchorage we leave,

The ship is clear at last—she leaps!

5

She swiftly courses from the shore;

Joy! shipmate—joy!

MATTHEW ARNOLD

SOHRAB AND RUSTUM.

He spoke; and Rustum answer'd not, but hurl'd
His spear: down from the shoulder, down it came,
As on some partridge in the corn a hawk,
That long has tower'd in the airy clouds,
Drops like a plummet: Sohrab saw it come, 5
And sprang aside, quick as a flash: the spear
Hiss'd, and went quivering down into the sand,
Which it sent flying wide:—then Sohrab threw
In turn, and full struck Rustum's shield: sharp rang,
The iron plates rang sharp, but turn'd the spear. 10
And Rustum seized his club, which none but he
Could wield: an unlopp'd trunk it was, and huge,
Still rough; like those which men in treeless plains
To build them boats fish from the flooded rivers,
Hyphasis or Hydaspes, when, high up 15
By their dark springs, the wind in winter-time
Hath made in Himalayan forests wrack,
And strewn the channels with torn boughs; so huge
The club which Rustum lifted now, and struck
One stroke; but again Sohrab sprang aside, 20
Lithe as the glancing snake, and the club came
Thundering to earth, and leapt from Rustum's hand.
And Rustum follow'd his own blow, and fell
To his knees, and with his fingers clutch'd the sand;
And now might Sohrab have unsheathed his sword, 25

And pierced the mighty Rustum while he lay
Dizzy, and on his knees, and chok'd with sand :
But he look'd on, and smiled, nor bared his sword,
But courteously drew back, and spoke, and said :—

“Thou strik'st too hard : that club of thine will float 30
Upon the summer floods, and not my bones.
But rise, and be not wroth ; not wroth am I :
No, when I see thee, wrath forsakes my soul.
Thou say'st, thou art not Rustum : be it so.
Who art thou then, that canst so touch my soul? 35
Boy as I am, I have seen battles too ;
Have waded foremost in their bloody waves,
And heard their hollow roar of dying men ;
But never was my heart thus touch'd before.
Are they from Heaven, these softening of the heart? 40
O thou old warrior, let us yield to Heaven !
Come, plant we here in earth our angry spears,
And make a truce, and sit upon this sand,
And pledge each other in red wine, like friends,
And thou shalt talk to me of Rustum's deeds. 45
There are enough foes in the Persian host,
Whom I may meet, and strike, and feel no pang ;
Champions enough Afrasiab has, whom thou
Mayst fight ; fight them, when they confront thy spear.
But oh, let there be peace 'twixt thee and me !” 50

He ceas'd : but while he spake, Rustum had risen,
And stood erect, trembling with rage : his club
He left to lie, but had regain'd his spear,
Whose fiery point now in his mail'd right-hand
Blazed bright and baleful, like that autumn star 55
The baleful sign of fevers : dust had soil'd
His stately crest, and dimm'd his glittering arms.
His breast heaved ; his lips foam'd ; and twice his voice
Was chok'd with rage : at last these words broke way :—

“Girl! nimble with thy feet, not with thy hands! 60
Curl’d minion, dancer, coiner of sweet words!
Fight; let me hear thy hateful voice no more!
Thou art not in Afrasiab’s gardens now
With Tartar girls, with whom thou art wont to dance;
But on the Oxus sands, and in the dance 65
Of battle, and with me, who make no play
Of war: I fight it out, and hand to hand.
Speak not to me of truce, and pledge, and wine!
Remember all thy valour: try thy feints
And cunning: all the pity I had is gone; 70
Because thou hast shamed me before both the hosts
With thy light skipping tricks, and thy girl’s wiles.”

He spoke; and Sohrab kindled at his taunts,
And fiercely drew his sword; at once they rush’d
Together, as two eagles on one prey 75
Come rushing down together from the clouds,
One from the east, one from the west: their shields
Dash’d with a clang together, and a din
Rose, such as that the sinewy woodcutters
Make often in the forest’s heart at morn, 80
Of hewing axes, crashing trees: such blows
Rustum and Sohrab on each other hail’d.
And you would say that sun and stars took part
In that unnatural conflict; for a cloud
Grew suddenly in Heaven, and dark’d the sun 85
Over the fighters’ heads; and a wind rose
Under their feet, and moaning swept the plain,
And in a sandy whirlwind wrapp’d the pair.
In gloom they twain were wrapp’d, and they alone;
For both the on-looking hosts on either hand 90
Stood in broad daylight, and the sky was pure,
And the sun sparkled on the Oxus stream.
But in the gloom they fought, with bloodshot eyes

And labouring breath; first Rustum struck the shield
Which Sohrab held stiff out; the steel-spiked spear 95
Rent the tough plates, but fail'd to reach the skin,
And Rustum pluck'd it back with angry groan.
Then Sohrab with his sword smote Rustum's helm,
Nor clove its steel quite through; but all the crest
He shore away, and that proud horsehair plume, 100
Never till now defil'd, sank to the dust;
And Rustum bow'd his head; but then the gloom
Crew blacker: thunder rumbled in the air,
And lightnings rent the cloud; and Ruksh, the horse,
Who stood at hand, utter'd a dreadful cry: 105
No horse's cry was that, most like the roar
Of some pain'd desert lion, who all day
Has trail'd the hunter's javelin in his side,
And comes at night to die upon the sand:—
The two hosts heard that cry, and quak'd for fear, 110
And Oxus curdled as it cross'd his stream.
But Sohrab heard and quail'd not, but rush'd on,
And struck again; and again Rustum bow'd
His head; but this time all the blade, like glass,
Sprang in a thousand shivers on the helm, 115
And in the hand the hilt remain'd alone.
Then Rustum raised his head; his dreadful eyes
Glar'd, and he shook on high his menacing spear,
And shouted, *Rustum!*—Sohrab heard that shout,
And shrank amazed: back he recoil'd one step, 120
And scan'd with blinking eyes the advancing form:
And then he stood bewild'rd; and he dropp'd
His covering shield, and the spear pierced his side.
He reel'd, and staggering back, sank to the ground.
And then the gloom dispers'd, and the wind fell, 125
And the bright sun broke forth, and melted all
The cloud; and the two armies saw the pair;

Saw Rustum standing; safe upon his feet,
And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody sand.

Then, with a bitter smile, Rustum began :— 130
“Sohrab thou thoughtest in thy mind to kill
A Persian lord this day, and strip his corpse,
And bear thy trophies to Afrasiab’s tent.
Or else that the great Rustum would come down
Himself to fight, and that thy wiles would move 135
His heart to take a gift, and let thee go.
And then that all the Tartar host would praise
Thy courage or thy craft, and spread thy fame,
To glad thy father in his weak old age.
Fool! thou art slain, and by an unknown man! 140
Dearer to the red jackals shalt thou be
Than to thy friends, and to thy father old.”

And, with a fearless mien, Sohrab replied :—
“Unknown thou art; yet thy fierce vaunt is vain,
Thou dost not slay me, proud and boastful man! 145
No! Rustum slays me, and this filial heart.
For were I match’d with ten such men as thee,
And I were he who till to-day I was,
They should be lying here, I standing there.
But that beloved name unnerved my arm— 150
That name, and something, I confess, in thee,
Which troubles all my heart, and made my shield
Fall; and thy spear transfix’d an unarm’d foe.
And now thou boastest, and insult’st my fate.
But hear thou this, fierce man, tremble to hear : 155
The mighty Rustum shall avenge my death!
My father, whom I seek through all the world,
He shall avenge my death, and punish thee!”

As when some hunter in the spring hath found 160
A breeding eagle sitting on her nest,
Upon the craggy isle of a hill-lake,

And pierc'd her with an arrow as she rose,
 And follow'd her to find out where she fell
 Far off;—anon her mate comes winging back
 From hunting, and a great way off describes 165
 His huddling young left sole; at that, he checks
 His pinion, and with short uneasy sweeps
 Circles above his eyry, with loud screams
 Chiding his mate back to her nest; but she
 Lies dying, with the arrow in her side, 170
 In some far stony gorge out of his ken,
 A heap of fluttering feathers: never more
 Shall the lake glass her, flying over it;
 Never the black and dripping precipices
 Echo her stormy scream as she sails by:— 175
 As that poor bird flies home, nor knows his loss
 So Rustum knew not his own loss, but stood
 Over his dying son, and knew him not.

And with a cold, incredulous voice, he said:
 "What prate is this of fathers and revenge? 180
 The mighty Rustum never had a son."

And, with a failing voice, Sohrab replied:—
 "Ah yes, he had! and that lost son am I.
 Surely the news will one day reach his ear,
 Reach Rustum, where he sits, and tarries long, 185
 Somewhere, I know not where, but far from here;
 And pierce him like a stab, and make him leap
 To arms, and cry for vengeance upon thee.
 Fierce man, bethink thee, for an only son!
 What will that grief, what will that vengeance be! 190
 Oh, could I live, till I that grief had seen!
 Yet him I pity not so much, but her,
 My mother, who in Ader-baijan dwells
 With that old king, her father, who grows grey
 With age, and rules over the valiant Koords. 195

Her most I pity, who no more will see
Sohrab returning from the Tartar camp,
With spoils and honour, when the war is done ;
But a dark rumour will be bruited up,
From tribe to tribe, until it reach her ear ; 200
And then will that defenceless woman learn
That Sohrab will rejoice her sight no more,
But that in battle with a nameless foe,
By the far-distant Oxus, he is slain."

He spoke ; and as he ceas'd he wept aloud, 205
Thinking of her he left, and his own death.

He spoke ; but Rustum listen'd, plung'd in thought.
Nor did he yet believe it was his son
Who spoke, although he call'd back names he knew ;
For he had had sure tidings that the babe, 210

Which was in Ader-baijan born to him,
Had been a puny girl, no boy at all :
So that sad mother sent him word, for fear
Rustum should seek the boy, to train in arms.

And so he deem'd that either Sohrab took, 215
By a false boast, the style of Rustum's son ;
Or that men gave it him, to swell his fame.

So deem'd he ; yet he listen'd, plung'd in thought ;
And his soul set to grief, as the vast tide
Of the bright rocking ocean sets to shore 220

At the full moon : tears gather'd in his eyes ;
For he remember'd his own early youth,
And all its bounding rapture ; as, at dawn,
The shepherd from his mountain-lodge describes
A far, bright city, smitten by the sun, 225

Through many rolling clouds—so Rustum saw
His youth ; saw Sohrab's mother, in her bloom ;
And that old king, her father, who loved well
His wandering guest, and gave him his fair child

With joy; and all the pleasant life they led, 250
 They three, in that long distant summer-time—
 The castle, and the dewy woods, and hunt
 And hound, and morn on these delightful hills
 In Ader-baijan. And he saw that Youth,
 Of age and looks to be his own dear son, 235
 Piteous and lovely, lying on the sand,
 Like some rich hyacinth, which by the scythe
 Of an unskilful gardener has been cut,
 Mowing the garden grass-plots near its bed,
 And lies, a fragrant tower of purple bloom, 240
 On the mown, dying grass;—so Sohrab lay,
 Lovely in death, upon the common sand.
 And Rustum gaz'd on him with grief, and said:—

“O Sohrab, thou indeed art such a son
 Whom Rustum, wert thou his, might well have lov'd! 245
 Yet here thou errest, Sohrab, or else men
 Have told thee false;—thou art not Rustum's son.
 For Rustum had no son: one child he had—
 But one—a girl: who with her mother now
 Plies some light female task, nor dreams of us— 250
 Of us she dreams not, nor of wounds, nor war.”

But Sohrab answer'd him in wrath; for now
 The anguish of the deep-fix'd spear grew fierce,
 And he desired to draw forth the steel,
 And let the blood flow free, and so to die; 255
 But first he would convince his stubborn foe;
 And, rising sternly on one arm, he said:—

“Man, who art thou who dost deny my words?
 Truth sits upon the lips of dying men,
 And falsehood, while I lived, was far from mine. 260
 I tell thee, prick'd upon this arm I bear
 That seal which Rustum to my mother gave,
 That she might prick it on the babe she bore.”

He spoke: and all the blood left Rustum's cheeks;
And his knees totter'd, and he smote his hand 265
Against his breast, his heavy mailed hand,
That the hard iron corslet clank'd aloud:
And to his heart he press'd the other hand,
And in a hollow voice he spake, and said:—

“Shorab, that were a proof which could not lie. 270
If thou show this, then art thou Rustum's son.”

Then, with weak hasty fingers, Sohrab loos'd
His belt, and near the shoulder bared his arm,
And show'd a sign in faint vermilion points
Prick'd: as a cunning workman, in Pekin, 275
Pricks with vermilion some clear porcelain vase,
An emperor's gift—at early morn he paints,
And all day long, and, when night comes, the lamp
Lights up his studious forehead and thin hands:—
So delicately prick'd the sign appear'd 280

On Sohrab's arm, the sign of Rustum's seal.
It was that griffin, which of old rear'd Zal,
Rustum's great father, whom they left to die,
A helpless babe, among the mountain rocks.
Him that kind creature found, and rear'd, and lov'd— 285
Then Rustum took it for his glorious sign.

And Sohrab bared that figure on his arm,
And himself scann'd it long with mournful eyes,
And then he touch'd it with his hand and said:—
“How say'st thou? Is that sign the proper sign 290
Of Rustum's son, or of some other man's?”

He spoke; but Rustum gaz'd, and gaz'd, and stood
Speechless; and then he utter'd one sharp cry—
O boy—thy father!—and his voice choked there.
And then a dark cloud pass'd before his eyes, 295
And his head swam, and he sank down to earth.
But Sohrab crawl'd to where he lay, and cast

His arms about his neck, and kiss'd his lips,
 And with fond faltering fingers stroked his cheeks,
 Trying to call him back to life: and life 300
 Came back to Rustum, and he op'd his eyes,
 And they stood wide with horror; and he seized
 In both his hands the dust which lay around,
 And threw it off his head, and smirch'd his hair,—
 His hair, and face, and beard, and glittering arms: 305
 And strong convulsive groanings shook his breast,
 And his sobs choked him; and he clutch'd his sword,
 To draw it, and for ever let life out.
 But Sohrab saw his thought, and held his hands,
 And with a soothing voice he spoke, and said:— 310
 "Father, forbear: for I but meet to-day
 The doom that at my birth was written down
 In Heaven, and thou art Heaven's unconscious hand.
 Surely my heart cried out that it was thou,
 When first I saw thee; and thy heart spoke too, 315
 I know it! but Fate trod those promptings down
 Under its iron heel; Fate, Fate engaged
 The strife, and hurl'd me on my father's spear.
 But let us speak no more of this: I find
 My father; let me feel that I have found. 320
 Come, sit beside me on this sand, and take
 My head betwixt thy hands, and kiss my cheeks,
 And wash them with thy tears, and say: "My son!"
 Quick! quick! for number'd are my sands of life,
 And swift; for like the lightning to this field 325
 I came, and like the wind I go away—
 Sudden, and swift, and like a passing wind.
 But it was writ in Heaven that this should be."
 So said he: and his voice released the heart
 Of Rustum, and his tears broke forth; he cast 330
 His arms round his son's neck, and wept aloud,

And kiss'd him. And awe fell on both the hosts,
When they saw Rustum's grief; and Ruksh, the horse,
With his head bowing to the ground and mane
Sweeping the dust, came near, and in mute woe 335
First to the one then to the other mov'd
His head, as if enquiring what their grief
Might mean; and from his dark, compassionate eyes,
The big warm tears roll'd down, and cak'd the sand.
But Rustum chid him with stern voice, and said:— 340
 "Ruksh, now thou grievest; but, O Ruksh, thy feet
Should then have rotted on their nimble joints,
When first they bore thy master to this field."
But Sohrab look'd upon the horse and said:—
 "Is this, then, Ruksh? How often, in past days, 345
My mother told me of thee, thou brave steed!
My terrible father's terrible horse; and said,
That I should one day find thy lord and thee.
Come, let me lay my hand upon thy mane.
O Ruksh, thou art more fortunate than I; 350
For thou hast gone where I shall never go,
And snuff'd the breezes of my father's home.
And thou hast trod the sands of Seistan,
And seen the river of Helmund, and the lake
Of Zirrah; and the aged Zal himself 355
Has often strok'd thy neck, and given thee food,
Corn in a golden platter soak'd with wine,
And said: 'O Ruksh! bear Rustum well!'—but I
Have never known my grandsire's furrow'd face,
Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan, 360
Nor slaked my thirst at the clear Helmund stream:
But lodg'd among my father's foes, and seen
Afrasiab's cities only, Samarcand,
Bokhara, and lone Khiva in the waste,
And the black Toorkmun tents; and only drunk 365

The desert rivers, Moorghab and Tejend,
 Kohik, and where the Kalmuks feed their sheep,
 The northern Sir; and this great Oxus stream,
 The yellow Oxus, by whose brink I die."

And, with a heavy groan, Rustum replied:— 370

"Oh, that its waves were flowing over me!
 Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt
 Roll tumbling in the current o'er my head!"

And, with a grave mild voice, Sohrab replied:—

"Desire not that, my father; thou must live. 375

For some are born to do great deeds, and live.

As some are born to be obscur'd, and die.

Do thou the deeds I die too young to do,

And reap a second glory in thine age.

Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine. 380

But come: thou seest this great host of men

Which follow me; I pray thee, slay not these:

Let me entreat for them: what have they done?

They follow'd me, my hope, my fame, my star.

Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace. 385

But me thou must bear hence, not send with them

But carry me with thee to Seistan,

And place me on a bed, and mourn for me,

Thou, and the snow-hair'd Zal, and all thy friends.

And thou must lay me in that lovely earth, 390

And heap a stately mound above my bones,

And plant a far-seen pillar over all:

That so the passing horseman on the waste

May see my tomb a great way off, and say—

Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies there, 395

Whom his great father did in ignorance kill—

And I be not forgotten in my grave,"

And, with a mournful voice, Rustum replied:—

"Fear not: as thou hast said, Sohrab, my son,

So shall it be: for I will burn my tents, 400
And quit the host, and bear thee hence with me,
And carry thee away to Seistan,
And place thee on a bed, and mourn for thee,
With the snow-headed Zal, and all my friends.
And I will lay thee in that lovely earth, 405
And heap a stately mound above thy bones,
And plant a far-seen pillar over all:
And men shall not forget thee in thy grave.
And I will spare thy host: yea, let them go:
Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace. 410
What should I do with slaying any more?
For would that all whom I have ever slain
Might be once more alive—my bitterest foes,
And they who were call'd champions in their time,
And through whose death I won that fame I have; 415
And I were nothing but a common man,
A poor, mean soldier, and without renown;
So thou mightest live too, my son, my son!
Or rather would that I, even I myself,
Might now be lying on this bloody sand, 420
Near death, and by an ignorant stroke of thine,
Not thou of mine; and I might die, not thou;
And I, not thou, be borne to Seistan;
And Zal might weep above my grave, not thine;
And say,—O son, I weep thee not too sore 425
For willingly, I know, thou met'st thine end.—
But now in blood and battles was my youth,
And full of blood and battles is my age,
And I shall never end this life of blood.”
Then, at the point of death, Sohrab replied:— 430
“A life of blood indeed, thou dreadful man!
But thou shalt yet have peace; only not now;
Not yet: but thou shalt have it on that day,

When thou shalt sail in a high-masted ship,
 Thou and the other peers of Kai Khosroo, 435
 Returning home over the salt blue sea,
 From laying thy dear master in his grave."

And Rustum gaz'd in Sohrab's face, and said:
 "Soon be that day, my son, and deep that sea!
 Till then, if fate so wills, let me endure." 440

He spoke; and Sohrab smiled on him, and took
 The spear, and drew it from his side, and eas'd
 His wound's imperious anguish: but the blood
 Came welling from the open gash, and life
 Flow'd with the stream: all down his cold white side 445
 The crimson torrent ran, dim now, and soil'd,
 Like the soil'd tissue of white violets
 Left, freshly gather'd, on their native bank,
 By romping children, whom their nurses call
 From the hot fields at noon: his head dropp'd low, 450
 His limbs grew slack; motionless, white, he lay—
 White, with eyes clos'd; only when heavy gasps,
 Deep, heavy gasps, quivering through all his frame,
 Convuls'd him back to life, he open'd them,
 And fix'd them feebly on his father's face: 455
 Till now all strength was ebb'd, and from his limbs
 Unwillingly the spirit fled away,
 Regretting the warm mansion which it left,
 And youth, and bloom, and this delightful world.

So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay dead; 460
 And the great Rustum drew his horseman's cloak
 Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead son.
 As those black granite pillars, once high-rear'd
 By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear
 His house, now, mid their broken flights of steps, 465
 Lie prone, enormous, down the mountain side—
 So in the sand lay Rustum by his son.

And night came down over the solemn waste,
And the two gazing hosts, and that sole pair,
And darken'd all; and a cold fog, with night, 470
Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum arose,
As of a great assembly loos'd, and fires
Began to twinkle through the fog: for now
Both armies mov'd to camp, and took their meal:
The Persians took it on the open sands 475
Southward; the Tartars by the river marge:
And Rustum and his son were left alone.

But the majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of that low land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there mov'd, 480
Rejoicing, through the hush'd Chorasman waste,
Under the solitary moon: he flow'd
Right for the polar star, past Orgunje,
Brimming, and bright, and large: then sands begin
To hem his watery march, and dam his streams, 485
And split his currents; that for many a league
The shorn and parcell'd Oxus strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles—
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain-cradle in Pamere, 490
A foil'd circuitous wanderer:—till at last
The long'd-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea 495

NOT HERE, O APOLLO

Not here, O Apollo!
Are haunts meet for thee.
But, where Helicon breaks down,
In cliff to the sea,

Where the moon-silver'd inlets 5
Send far their light voice
Up the still vale of Thisbe,
O speed, and rejoice!

On the sward at the cliff-top
Lie strewn the white flocks; 10
On the cliff-side the pigeons
Roost deep in the rocks.

In the moonlight the shepherds,
Soft lull'd by the rills,
Lie wrapt in their blankets 15
Asleep on the hills.

—What forms are these coming
So white through the gloom?
What garments out-glistening
The gold-flower'd broom? 20

What sweet-breathing presence
Out-perfumes the thyme?
What voices enrapture
The night's balmy prime?—

'Tis Apóllo comes leading 25

His choir, the Nine.

—The leader is fairest,

But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows !

They stream up again ! 30

What seeks on this mountain

The glorified train?—

They bathe on this mountain,

In the spring by their road ;

Then on to Olympus, 35

Their endless abode !

—Whose praise do they mention ?

Of what is it told?—

What will be for ever ;

What was from of old. 40

First hymn they the Father

Of all things ; and then

The rest of immortals,

The action of men.

The day in his hotness, 45

The strife with the palm ;

The night in her silence,

The stars in their calm.

COVENTRY PATMORE.*

THE TOYS.

My little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes
And mov'd and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,
 I struck him, and dismiss'd
 With hard words and unkiss'd, 5
His Mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
 I visited his bed;
 But found him slumbering deep,
With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet 10
 From his late sobbing wet.
 And I, with moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;
For, on a table drawn beside his head,
 He had put, within his reach, 15
A box of counters and a red-vein'd stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach
 And six or seven shells,
 A bottle with blue-bells
And two French copper coins, ranged there with
 careful art, 20
 To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I pray'd
To God, I wept, and said :

*By kind permission of Messrs. G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., London.

Ah, when at last we lie with trancèd breath,
Not vexing Thee in death, 25
And Thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less 30
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
I will be sorry for their childishness.'

GEORGE MEREDITH.*

LUCIFER IN STARLIGHT.

On a starred night Prince Lucifer uprose,
Tired of his dark dominion swung the fiend
Above the rolling ball in cloud part screened,
Where sinners hugged their spectre of repose.
Poor prey to his hot fit of pride were those. 5
And now upon his western wing he leaned,
Now his huge bulk o'er Afric's sands careened,
Now the black planet shadowed Arctic snows.

Soaring through wider zones that pricked his scars
With memory of the old revolt from Awe, 10
He reached a middle height, and at the stars,
Which are the brain of heaven, he looked, and sank.
Around the ancient track marched, rank on rank,
The army of unalterable law.

*By kind permission of Messrs. Constable & Co., Ltd., London
and Messrs. Charles Scribners' Sons, New York.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.*

A CHILD'S LAUGHTER.

All the bells of heaven may ring,
All the birds of heaven may sing,
All the wells on earth may spring,
All the winds on earth may bring
All sweet sounds together ;
Sweeter far than all things heard,
Hand of harper, tone of bird,
Sound of woods at sundawn stirred,
Welling water's winsome word,
Wind in warm wan weather.

One thing yet there is, that none.
Hearing ere its chime be done
Knows not well the sweetest one
Heard of man beneath the sun,
 Hoped in heaven hereafter; 15
Soft and strong and loud and light,
Very sound of very light
Heard from morning's rosiest height,
When the soul of all delight
 Fills a child's clear laughter. 20

Golden bells of welcome rolled
Never forth such notes, nor told

*By kind permission of Messrs. William Heinemann Ltd.,
Publishers of Swinburne's works, London.

Hours so blithe in tones so bold,
As the radiant month of gold
 Here that rings forth heaven. 25
If the golden-crested wren
Were a nightingale—why, then,
Something seen and heard of men
Might be half as sweet as when
 Laughs a child of seven. 30

MONMOHAN GHOSE.*

LONDON.

Farewell, sweetest country ; out of my heart ye roses,
Wayside roses, nodding, the slow traveller to keep,
Too long have I drowsed alone in the meadows deep
Too long alone endured the silence Nature espouses.
Oh, the rush, the rapture of life ! throngs, lights, houses, 5
This is London. I wake as a sentinel from sleep.

Stunned with the fresh thunder, the harsh, delightful
noises,
I move entranced on the thronging pavement. How
sweet,
To eyes sated with green, the dusty, brick-walled street !
And the lone spirit, of self so weary, how it rejoices 10
To be lost in others, bathed in the tones of human voices,
And feel hurried along the happy tread of feet.

And a sense of vast sympathy my heart almost crazes,
The warmth of kindred hearts in thousands beating
with mine,
Each fresh face, each figure, my spirit drinks like
wine,— 15
Thousands endlessly passing. Violets, daisies,
What is your charm to the passionate charm of faces,
This ravishing reality, this earthliness divine?

O murmur of men more sweet than all the wood's caresses,
How sweet only to be an unknown leaf that sings 20
In the forest of life ! Cease, Nature, thy whisperings.
Can I talk with leaves, or fall in love with breezes?
Beautiful boughs, your shade not a human pang appeases,
This is London. I lie and twine in the roots of things.

*By kind permission of Messrs. Basil Blackwell, London.

SIR WILLIAM WATSON.*

SWEETEST SWEETS THAT TIME HAS RIFLED

Sweetest sweets that Time has rifled,
Live anew on lyric tongue—
Tresses with which Paris trifled,
Lips to Antony's that clung.
These surrender not their rose 5
Nor their golden puissance those.

Vain the envious loam that covers
Her of Egypt, her of Troy :
Helen's, Cleopatra's lovers
Still desire them, still enjoy. 10
Fate but stole what Song restored :
Vain the aspic, vain the cord.

Idly clanged the sullen portal,
Idly the sepulchral door :
Fame the mighty, Love the immortal, 15
These than foolish dust are more :
Nor may captive Death refuse
Homage to the conquering Muse.

By kind permission of the poet.

RUPERT BROOKE.*

THE SOLDIER.

If I should die, think only this of me :
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware, 5
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less 10
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England
given ;
Her sights and sounds ; dreams happy as her day ;
And laughter, learnt of friends ; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

*From "Collected Poems" by Rupert Brooke. By kind permission of his Literary Executor and of the publishers Messrs. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd., London.

SAROJINI NAIDU.*

IN THE BAZARS OF HYDERABAD.

"What do ye sell, O ye merchants?
Richly your wares are displayed."
"Turbans of crimson and silver,
Tunics of purple brocade,
Mirrors with panels of amber, 5
Daggers with handles of jade."

"What do you weigh, O ye vendors?"
"Saffron and lentil and rice."
"What do you grind, O ye maidens,"
"Sandalwood, henna and spice." 10
"What do you call, O ye pedlars?"
"Chessmen and ivory dice."

"What do you make, O'ye goldsmiths?"
"Wristlet and anklet and ring,
Bells for the feet of blue pigeons, 15
Frail as a dragon-fly's wing
Girdles of gold for the dancers,
Scabbards of gold for the king."

"What do you cry, O ye fruitmen?"
"Citron, pomegranate and plum." 20
"What do you play, O musicians?"
"Citar, sarangi and drum."
"What do you chant, O magicians?"
"Spells for the æons to come"

*By kind permission of Messrs. William Heinemann Ltd.,
London.

“What do you weave, O ye flower girls 25
With tassels of azure and red?”

“Crowns for the brow of a bridegroom,
Chaplets to garland his bed,
Sheets of white blossoms new-gathered
To perfume the sleep of the dead.” 30

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

MORNING.

In thy name I ope my eyes
Upon the holy morn to-day ;
In thy name doth all my heart
Its hundred petals open lay ;
In thy name the touch of dark 5
Is streak'd with lines of golden fire ;
In thy name now bursts the light
Like music from the morning's lyre !
In thy name the eastern gate
Its mighty portals doth unfold,— 10
In thy name comes forth the sun
Brow-bound with newly-burnish'd gold ;
In thy name the sea of life
With play of ripples wakes anew ;
In thy name, lo, all the world 15
Deck'd in beauty comes to view.

THE NIGHT-LAMP.

Softly, softly, softly blow
O night-wind, O restless wind :
Thrills a note on Midnight's pipe !—
Hush, O wind, go soft and slow.
I, the night-lamp, for thy sake 5
In fear and trembling keep awake,—
Tell thy secret in mine ear,
But hush, O wind, speak it low.

News from far-off woods in spring
Unto my room-corner bring ;
 I too have a word to send
 To the stars at darkness' end ;
Take it in thine ear, O wind—
 Take it softly ere you go.

,10

NOTES.

NOTES.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564—1616).

Shakespeare, the greatest English dramatic poet, was born at Stratford-on-Avon in Warwickshire and was educated in the free Grammar School there. He married young and came to London about 1586. He soon obtained employment as an actor but it was as a writer for the stage during the twenty years from 1591 to 1611 that he made his name immortal. He then retired to Stratford where he lived prosperous and honoured till his death.

Shakespeare is the representative Englishman of his time. He shews us the England of the Renaissance, the England that had recovered from the terrible wars of the Roses, the England that had defeated the Spanish Armada, the England that had realised how large and interesting the world really was, and above all the England that was ready to take a vigorous and manly part in the struggles that were to come. But he was more than the man of his age. He looked deeply into life and its problems and perhaps nowhere has he expressed the difficulty of understanding the mystery of all that we are and do than in the famous lines in *the Tempest* ending.

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

JULIUS CÆSAR, FROM ACT III, SCENE II.

This famous speech was delivered by Mark Antony just after the assassination of Julius Cæsar. The scene is the Forum at Rome. Brutus, Cassius and other murderers of Cæsar were not present.

- Line 23. **Lupercal.** The Lupercalia was a festival held in honour of the God Pan on the 15th of February, just a month therefore, before the death of Cæsar.
- „ 48. This means that the lowest in worldly position is now too high to do reverence to Cæsar.
- „ 57. **Closet.** Office or study.
- „ 61. **Napkins.** Handkerchiefs.
- „ 78. **O'ershot myself.** Gone too far.
- „ 89. **Pulpit.** Rostrum, on which he had been standing to make his speech.
- „ 100. **Nervii.** A tribe of Gaul whom Cæsar had defeated in 57 B. C.
- „ 106. **To be resolved.** To make certain.

- Line 108. **Cæsar's angel.** The friend in 'whom he trusted.
- „ 115. **Pompey's Statua.** Statua the word then used for statue.
Cæsar was struck down by the daggers of his assassins at the foot of Pompey's statue.
- „ 116. **Which, etc.** Which was covered with his blood.
- „ 121. **The dint.** The impression.
- „ 124. **Marr'd.** Lacerated or defaced by traitors.
- „ 145. **That, etc.** And they who gave me leave to speak about him know that very well.
- „ 169. **Drachma.** A coin worth about seven annas.
- „ 176. **On t'is side Tiber.** The gardens were on the opposite side of the River Tiber at Rome. Antony was speaking in the Forum. Shakespeare, perhaps wrote on that side; or more likely copied some one else's mistake.

HAMLET, ACT I. SCENE III.

Laertes, who is just going on a voyage, takes leave of his sister Ophelia and of his father Polonius. Polonius gives him sage and often quoted advice and both he and, when he has gone, Polonius warn Ophelia that she must not take the advances of Hamlet seriously, as he is never likely, for various reasons, to marry her.

- Line 2. **As the Winds, etc.** As the wind is favourable and there is a convenient ship to carry me.
- „ 7. **A toy in blood.** A mere fancy.
- „ 8. **A violet, etc.** A spring flower only.
- „ 9. **Suppliance of a minute.** Something that fills up a spare moment only.
- „ 11. **Crescent.** Growing.
- „ 12. **Thews.** Sinews, muscular strength.
- „ 15. **Soil,** means stain, **cautel** is fraud or deceit.
- „ 17. **His greatness weigh'd,** we must remember the rank that he holds.
- „ 20. **Carve.** Cut out, that is choose.
- „ 23. **Body.** The people or State.
- „ 25. **It fits, etc.** It will be wisest on your part only to place reliance upon what he says to the extent to which he can carry out what he promises.
- „ 30. **Credent,** credulous.
Song's. His proposals.

- Line 36. **Chariest.** Most cautious.
- „ 39. **Infants.** Flowers.
- „ 40. **Buttons.** Buds.
- „ 44. **To itself.** Against itself.
- „ 51. **And recks not his own rede.** And heeds not himself the lesson he gives to others.
- „ 56. The wind is favourable.
- „ 57. **Staid.** Waited.
- „ 59. **Look thou character.** See that you impress or engrave.
- „ 60. **Unproportion'd.** Unsuitable, ungraceful.
- „ 79. **Censure.** Here, opinion.
- „ 73-5. This is a difficult passage and may perhaps be paraphrased: And they in France of the highest rank shew their good breeding by their dress. The word 'Chief' means the upper part of a shield in heraldry; hence select and generous chief would imply—of a high born family.
- „ 83. **Tend,** are waiting for you.
- „ 86. **And you yourself, etc.** Your counsels are as sure of remaining locked in my memory as if you kept the key of it.
- „ 96. **Understand yourself.** Here probably: you do not understand your conduct, etc.
- „ 101. **Green.** Inexperienced.
- „ 102. **Unsifted.** Untried—one who has not sifted or looked into such matters.
- „ 106. **Pay.** Money.
- „ 109. **Wronging.** Some have thought wringing would be better; twisting or contorting the phrase too much. Mr. Santyana adopts the following emendation:—
Or—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus—you'll tender me a fool.
You'll tender me a fool. Make me look foolish in the eyes of people generally.
- „ 111. **Fashion.** Ophelia uses fashion as meaning manner. Polonius in the next line uses the word as meaning the caprice of a moment.
- „ 115. **Springs.** Snares. The woodcock was thought a very foolish bird.
- „ 117. **Blazes.** Passionate words of love.
- „ 121. **Scanter,** etc. Be not so ready to grant interviews.
- „ 123. **Command to parley.** Direction to surrender.

- Line 125. **Tether.** Rope that ties an animal up. Hence the meaning is: Believe that Hamlet is now young and that he will move in a larger world than your birth will open to you.
- „ 127. **Brokers.** Procurers.
- „ 128. **Investments.** Clothes, external appearance.
- „ 129. **Implorators.** Those who implore.

HAMLET, ACT III. SCENE I.

This famous soliloquy deals with the question whether, when he is harassed and distracted by many troubles, it is right on a man's part to give up the struggle and put an end to himself. Some have thought that Hamlet is rather considering whether he ought to take steps to deliver himself from his troubles even though it might involve the loss of his life, but that clearly is not the meaning; he had resolved to do that in any case.

- Line 4. **A sea of troubles.** A proverbial expression in Greek. Troubles so numerous that they flow in upon us and encompass us like a sea.
- „ 12. **Mortal Coil.** Disturbance, bustle; turmoil of life.
- „ 13. **Respect.** Here, consideration.
- „ 15. **Whips, etc.** The ridicule and abuse of the times.
- „ 20. **Quietus.** A legal term meaning a writ of discharge, hence here, an end or settlement.
- „ 21. **Bodkin.** A small dagger. **Fardels.** Burdens.
- „ 22. **Grunt.** Groan.
- „ 24. **The undiscover'd country, etc.** The unknown land from which no one returns to give us an account of what he has seen. Shakespeare had in mind no doubt the voyages of discovery which were being made in his day. Goethe has a similar thought.
- Bourn.** Limit or boundary.
- „ 25. **Will.** The mind.
- „ 30. **Thought.** Care or anxiety.
- „ 31. **Pith and moment.** Pith is marrow, hence strength. Moment is importance.
- „ 32. **With this regard.** Looked at in this way.

KING HENRY V, ACT III, SCENE I.

This speech is supposed to be made by Henry during the attack on the French fortress of Harfleur at the mouth of the Seine. The capture of Harfleur took place in September, 1415 at

the beginning of the campaign which ended with the victory of Agincourt on October the 25th.

- Line 2. **Or close the wall, etc.** The sense is, 'go again into the breach you have made in the wall or leave your bodies there.'
- „ 6. **The tiger.** Shakespeare thought, with others of his day, that the tiger roared and raged in storms and high winds.
- „ 10. **Portage.** Open space. The eyes are to be like cannon looking through the portholes.
- „ 11. **Overwhelm.** Overshadow.
- „ 12. **Galled.** Jagged.
- „ 13. **O'erhang and jutty his confounded base.** Sir Sidney Lee suggests, project over its ruined foundations.
- „ 14. **Swill'd.** Washed.
- „ 18. **Fet.** Fetched or drawn.
- „ 21. **Argument.** Subject, matter to fight about.
- „ 24. **Be copy.** Set an example.
- „ 31. **Slips.** Leather straps that hold the greyhounds until it is wished to loose them.

KING RICHARD III, ACT I, SCENE IV.

This terrible scene describes the last hours of the Duke of Clarence, brother of King Edward IV and of Richard Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard III. He had been false to Edward who had pardoned but not forgiven him and now on fresh charges he had been imprisoned in the Tower under sentence of death. Tradition says that he chose to be drowned in a cask of Malmsey wine, but Shakespeare's version of the story that he was stabbed and that his body was afterwards placed in a cask that happened to be near seems very probable. The event took place in 1478.

- Line 1. **Brakenbury.** Sir Robert Brakenbury, Lieutenant (that is keeper) of the Tower of London.
- „ 4. **Faithful.** Here, one having faith; not an infidel.
- „ 10. **Burgundy.** The Duke of Burgundy, Charles the Bold, who had supported Edward and helped him to get back his throne in 1471, had been killed at Nancy in 1477. Clarence for a time hoped to marry Mary of Burgundy, the daughter of Charles and heiress to the vast Burgundian inheritance which included the Netherlands and other possessions. Mary however in 1477 married Maximilian, the son of the Emperor Frederick.

- Line 17. **Hatches.** The coverings to the openings which lead to the hold of a ship. Hence they are a little higher than the rest of the deck.
- „ 18. **Gloucester.** Richard, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III. We must remember that in his historical plays Shakespeare had in the main only the Lancastrian version of the days of the Wars of the Roses to go upon. All other information had been carefully destroyed. The writers of the Tudor times accused Richard, sometimes as we know wrongly, of many of the crimes of the age in which he lived. That he killed the two sons of Edward IV in the Tower seems certain. But that he killed the son of Henry VI after the Battle of Tewksbury, that he killed Henry VI himself, and that he had the wife of Clarence poisoned, seems from the little that we know highly improbable.
- „ 20. **The main.** The open sea. Often so used in Robinson Crusoe.
- „ 27. **Unvalued.** Here perhaps used for invaluable.
- „ 32. **Woo'd.** That gazed upon it.
- „ 37. **Yield the ghost.** Gave up the ghost; die.
- „ 39. **To seek, etc.** A wonderful line. The words convey exactly the sense of mysterious sadness which Shakespeare intended.
- „ 40. **Bulk.** Body.
- „ 41. **Belch.** Vomit. Literally to emit wind from the throat and mouth.
- „ 43-4. **O, no, etc.** My dream continued and dealt with what happened after my death, the terrible adventures which my soul had.
- „ 46. **Grim Ferryman.** Charon who is supposed to ferry the souls of the dead across the river Styx.
- „ 49. **Warwick.** Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick (1428-1471), 'The king-maker,' who played such a prominent part in the Wars of the Roses, and whose daughter Isabel Clarence had married.
- „ 50. **Perjury.** During the revolution of 1470 which put Edward IV off the throne for a time, Clarence joined Warwick. He subsequently went over to Edward's side again.
- „ 51. **Dark monarchy.** The shades of death.
- „ 53. **A shadow, etc.** The young son of King Henry VI who was supposed to have been stabbed by Clarence and Gloucester in Edward the fourth's tent after the battle of Tewksbury in 1471. He was more probably slain, whilst flying from the battle-field, by others.

- Line 55. **Fleeting.** The idea is that of a man who cannot be relied upon.
- „ 72. **Wife.** Clarence's wife had died on December 21st, 1476, so that this is a slip on Shakespeare's part.
- Children.** Clarence's son and daughter both perished on the scaffold. The daughter Margaret, Countess of Salisbury was put to death by Henry VIII; the son Edward after long confinement fell a victim to Henry VII.
- „ 78. **Princes, etc.** The glories of princes are nothing more than empty titles. For the honour paid them they have in return nothing but trouble. They often suffer real miseries for imaginary and unreal gratifications.
- „ 82. **Low name.** Men of lower rank or position.

SIR HENRY WOTTON (1568—1639).

Wotton was a busy man of affairs, an ambassador for nearly twenty years at Venice, and later Provost of Eton where he died. He was a man of learning and a friend of learned men.

THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE.

- Line 8. **Private breath.** What people might say.
- „ 10. **Nor vice.** Vice is subject to 'raise'.
- „ 11. **How deepest wounds, etc.** Insincerity.
- „ 15. **Whose State.** Whose fortune.
- „ 18. **Grace.** The spirit of God. He prays that God will make him a better man rather than a rich one.
- „ 21. **Bands.** Here 'bonds.' He is not the slave of continual hopes and fears.

JOHN MILTON (1608—1674).

Milton is the great Puritan poet. He expressed the exalted religious views of those who wished to live severely and honestly in a time of much levity and freedom of thought. Be he was much more than that. He has left verse that will live for all time and which has been the delight of men of every creed and of every mode of thought. He was a Londoner of good family and was educated at St. Paul's School and afterwards at Christ's College Cambridge, becoming after the fashion of his time almost a perfect scholar. After some years of study he hurried home from Italy where he was travelling to take his part in the great struggle of the seventeenth century, becoming Latin Secretary to the Council of State and serving in that capacity throughout the Protectorate. Unfortunately his eyesight grew gradually weaker

and when the Restoration came he was totally blind. He had written some of his finest poems when he was young but in the last dark days of the Protectorate he composed *Paradise Lost*, which was followed by *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*. He was passionately fond of music and the student will note a reference to its power, perhaps the finest in the English language, in *Il Penseroso*. He died as he had mostly lived, in London.

SONNET VII.

This beautiful little poem was composed in 1631 when Milton was, as he says, just twenty-three years old; perhaps it was written on the 9th of December, his birthday. In this poem the author defends himself from the charge of leading a useless life devoted to mere study.

- Line 4. **No bud or blossom.** He had not produced anything: there had been as yet no practical result of his studies.
- „ 5. **My semblance.** My appearance. Milton looked very young and girlish.
- „ 8. **That some, etc.** Some are more fortunate in being imbued with inward ripeness.
- „ 9. &c. These lines point to the great purpose of Milton's life—the composition of some noble poem.
- „ 14. **Great task-master.** God.

SONNET XVI.

In this sonnet, probably composed in 1655, Milton alludes to his blindness.

- Line 3. **One talent.** This is an allusion to the parable of the Talents as related in the gospel according to St. Matthew XXV verses 14 etc. He that had received one talent hid it in the earth and was punished when his lord returned.
- „ 8. **Fondly.** Foolishly. But perhaps 'wistfully' would be better as there is nothing foolish in the question.
- „ 10. **Who.** Those 'who.

IL PENSEROSO.

(*The thoughtful man*).

L'Allegro and Il Penseroso were most probably written soon after Milton had left Cambridge and when he was living in the country near Windsor. This must have been between 1632 and

1638. The two poems are connected together. Each describes a day in the life of a man. In the one case the day is that of one who loves cheerfulness, in the other that of, it has been suggested, the same man in a mood of serious contemplation.

Line 1. **Hence vain deluding joys.** Such as are described in *L'Allegro*.

„ 3. **Bested.** An old word meaning 'avail'.

„ 6. **Fond.** Foolish.

„ 10. **Pensioners.** Retiree, followers.

Morpheus. The God of dreams, the son of sleep.

„ 18. **Memnon.** Prince Memnon, son of Tithonus (who was the brother of Priam) came from his kingdom of Ethiopia to help the Trojans but only to be killed by Achilles. His sister, like Memnon himself, must have been very handsome.

„ 19. **That starred Ethiopie queen.** The beautiful old legend relates that Cassiopea, the wife of Cepheus, King of Ethiopia, was so proud of her beauty that she challenged the Nereids claiming that she was more beautiful than they. They however to punish her persuaded Poseidon to send a Monster to ravage Ethiopia, and her daughter Andromeda was to have been sacrificed to this creature to save the country when Perseus rescued her and slew the monster. Cassiopea was afterwards changed into the constellation that bears her name and that is why Milton speaks of her as 'starred'. It has been conjectured that Milton was acquainted with the dark picture of Melancholia by the great artist Albert Dürer.

„ 33. **Vesta.** Milton here indulges his imagination and gives us a fanciful account of the birth of Melancholy. He makes her the child of Vesta, the goddess of flocks and herds and of household affairs generally, by Saturn her father the gloomy chief of heaven.

„ 29. **Ida.** A high mountain in the island of Crete.

„ 20. **Jove.** The son of Saturn who revolted against his father according to the legend, and became the highest of the Divine beings in his place.

„ 35. **Sable stole of Cypress lawn.** Sable here is black. A stole is a scarf; the word is used of a vestment which priests of the Church of England wear when they are performing the service. Lawn is very fine linen and probably it first came from the island of Cyprus. Hence the word Cypress here.

„ 37. **Thy wonted State.** Thy accustomed serious demeanour.

- Line 39. **Commercing.** Holding converse with. The accent is on the second syllable.
- „ 40. **Rapt.** Absorbed, intent.
- „ 42. **Forget,** etc. Be so absorbed as to become like a marble statue.
- „ 43. **Leaden.** The colour of Melancholy.
- „ 46. **Fast.** Abstinence.
- „ 47. **Muses.** The nine goddesses of the liberal arts such as music, painting, etc.
- „ 51. **But first,** etc. Milton had in mind the vision of the sapphire throne guarded by cherubs described in the 10th chapter of *Ezekiel* in the Bible. One of these cherubs he calls Contemplation.
- „ 55. **Hist.** Bring, imperative.
- „ 56. **Philomel.** The nightingale.
- „ 59. **Cynthia.** A name for Diana who is typified by the Moon. She stops to listen to the nightingale. The notion of Diana's chariot being drawn by dragons is Milton's own.
- „ 73. **Plat.** A form of the word plot.
- „ 74. **Curfew.** The bell at nightfall. Milton when at Cambridge must have heard the bell of Great St. Mary's Church ringing at nine o'clock.
- „ 77. **Air.** Weather. If the weather will not permit of rambles in the open air, the serious scholar retires to his comfortable study warmed by a wood fire.
- „ 83. **Bellman.** The watchman who, like the modern policeman, went his rounds, singing or calling as he went.
- „ 87. **The Bear.** The constellation known as the Great Bear is visible all night, so Milton imagines the student reading until morning.
- „ 88. **Thrice Great Hermes.** He studies the works of the Egyptian King and Philosopher Hermes Trismegistus (thrice great). Much of what was said to be written by him is now known to be the work of later philosophers.
- Unsphere.** Bring back Plato from the spirit world.
- „ 95. **Consent.** Agreement or connection. Milton here refers to the old notion of the demons of earth, air and water.
- „ 97. **Tragedy.** The scholar in his study leaves philosophy and turns to the works of the great writers of Tragedy.

- Line 99. **Presenting, etc.** Milton here refers to the great Greek authors of Tragedy, Æschylus, Sophocles and Euripides.
- „ 102. **Buskin'd stage.** The buskin, a boot reaching nearly up to the knee was worn by the Greek tragic actors and hence is symbolical of tragedy. In the same way the 'sock' was the comic actors' shoe, and the word sock was used allusively also.
- „ 103. **But, O sad Virgin, etc.** Here Milton expresses the wish that the lost poems of Greece such as were supposed to be written by Musæus or Orpheus could be recovered.
- „ 105. **Orpheus.** This beautiful legend of Orpheus, who was supposed to have been a poet and musician who lived in Thrace before the Trojan War, relates that having lost his wife Eurydice he descended to the lower regions and charmed Pluto so much by his music that he allowed him to take away his wife. This favour however was granted on the condition that he did not look behind him as he went out. Anxious to see his wife again he did look back and so lost her for ever.
- „ 109. **Call him up, etc.** Milton here refers to Chaucer whose Squire's Tale, in the Canterbury Tales, was left unfinished. Cambuscan was a Tartar king; Camball and Algarsife were his sons, Canace was his daughter though it is not clear who was her husband. The magic ring gave to its possessor the power to understand the speech of birds. The glass or mirror distinguished truth from falsehood and had prophetic power also. The horse of brass bore him who rode it wherever he wished.
- „ 122. **Civil-suited.** Plainly dressed.
- „ 123. **Tricked.** Dressed or adorned. **Fronced.** Plaited or curled.
- „ 124. **Cephale.** Who was loved by Aurora, the goddess of the morning.
- „ 125. **Kerchieft.** Covered. Probably having a handkerchief over the head.
- „ 130. **Minute drops.** Drops falling slowly. Cf. minute guns.
- „ 134. **Sylvan.** Sylvanus, the god of woods.
- „ 148. **Wave at his wings, etc.** This is a difficult passage. Perhaps Masson's suggestion is the best one. "Let some strange mysterious dream wave, (i.e. move to and fro) at his (i.e. sleep's) wings, in airy stream etc."
- „ 156. **Pale.** Enclosed place.

- Line 157. **The high-embowed roof.** Arched roof. Milton in this wonderful passage is no doubt recollecting the glorious musical services which he had heard in King's College Chapel, Cambridge.
- „ 159. **Storied windows.** Windows filled with stained glass illustrating stories from the Bible. King's chapel has many such.
- „ 170. **Spell.** Work out.
- „ 173. **Old.** Long.

ANDREW MARVELL (1621—1678).

This poet was born in Yorkshire. Educated at the Hull Grammar School and at Trinity College, Cambridge, travelled and then took sides with the Parliamentarians against the King. He was Milton's colleague as Latin Secretary and was long a Member of Parliament. As the verses included here shew he was a great admirer of Cromwell, but that did not prevent him from recognizing merit in others. He wrote much verse and prose but he seldom rose to anything like the level of the noble "Horatian Ode." It registers for us and for men of every age the impression which Cromwell made upon a contemporary capable of appreciating his heroic qualities and of expressing that impression in suitable language.

AN HORATIAN ODE.

- Line 3. **Nor in the shadows sing.** He must not stay in retired places but must come forth and take an active part in public affairs.
- „ 8. **Corslet.** A piece of armour for protecting the body.
- „ 15. **Through his own side, etc.** The meaning is that Cromwell would burst through and that he rivalled those on his own side as well as got the better of his foes. He would not be kept back or inclosed.
- „ 23. **Cæsar's.** Charles the First's.
- „ 24. **Laurels.** Achievements.
- „ 32. **Bergamot.** A fruit tree, a kind of pear.
- „ 39. **Those.** *i.e.*, the ancient rights, the old constitution of England.
- „ 47. **Hampton.** Hampton Court. Charles I had been taken from Holmby House to Hampton Court in August, 1647 and there elaborate negotiations between him and the army and the Parliament took place. In the course of them Charles entirely lost the confidence of all parties.
- „ 48. **Wiser Art.** The art of political diplomacy.

- Line 51. **Chase.** 'That might chase Charles himself.'
- „ 52. **Carisbrook.** Carisbrook Castle in the Isle of Wight to which Charles I escaped from Hampton Court in November, 1647 and where he soon became a prisoner.
Case. Enclosure, hence prison.
- „ 53. **The Royal Actor.** King Charles. Note the dignity and grandeur of the lines which follow describing the King's execution.
- „ 68. **The Capitol,** at Rome. This is the popular legend.
- „ 73. **The Irish.** Cromwell returned from his victorious expedition to Ireland early in 1650, and was expected as the poem shews to conquer other countries. Line 102 speaks of his possibly going to France like Cæsar, or, line 103, to Italy like Hannibal the Carthaginian. What he did do was to invade Scotland as is foretold in line 106.
- „ 104. **Climacteric.** Constituting a crisis, critical.
- „ 105. **Pict.** The Picts were the ancient inhabitants of Scotland.
- „ 112. **Caledonian deer.** The frightened Scotchmen hiding from Cromwell's pursuit.
- „ 119. **The same arts, etc.** Government rests on force and must be both founded and maintained thereby.

HENRY VAUGHAN (1622—1695).

A Welsh country doctor who was educated at Oxford; wrote a good deal of religious poetry. He is always known as 'the Silurist' the Silures being the ancient inhabitants of the part of Wales in which he lived. His verses had some influence upon Wordsworth.

DEPARTED FRIENDS.

- Line 7. **This hill.** Vaughan was writing in a very hilly and beautiful country.
- „ 10. **Trample.** Here perhaps the meaning is that the glorious world in which the dead friends are walking far surpasses the gloomy one in which Vaughan still finds himself.
- „ 13. **Holy Hope.** Hope of everlasting life.
- „ 25. **And yet.** We have sometimes beautiful dreams in which our souls commune with the angels and in the same way thoughts come to us at times outside of our ordinary experience and we seem to look into the world to come.

- Line 35. **Resume thy spirit.** Take me back, me who am thy
 Spirit. Thrall. Bondage.
 „ 39. **That Hill.** Heaven.
 „ 40. **Glass.** Glass to see with.

JOHN DRYDEN (1631—1700).

Dryden the greatest poet after Milton of the second half of the seventeenth century and the poet who wrote the kind of verse which the men of that time and the century that followed loved best, was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was distinguished in many branches of his art for he wrote vigorous and powerful satires, excellent translations from the classics, popular plays, and narrative and occasional verse. For a time he was Poet Laureate but lost his post as a Roman Catholic favourite of the Stuarts at the revolution of 1688. He was always poor and the extraordinary thing is that in spite of his many troubles he wrote with strength and energy to the last. He used the heroic couplet which Pope employed also. In the verses to Congreve he commended the protection of his fame, Congreve being then a young dramatist beginning a successful career, to his friend.

TO MY DEAR FRIEND MR. CONGREVE.

The Double Dealer. This popular play was first acted in November, 1693. Congreve's first play *The Old Bachelor* had been more successful. But though *The Double Dealer* was not well received at first it was afterwards popular enough.

- Line 7. **Janus.** The mythical hero who was said to have taught the Italians husbandry.
 „ 15. **Vitruvius.** Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, who lived in the days of Julius Cæsar and Augustus and wrote a book on Architecture. In these lines Dryden uses architectural examples to explain the growth of poetic skill in England.
 „ 20. **Fletcher.** John Fletcher (1576-1625) a well-known English dramatist of Shakespeare's time.
 „ 22. **Great Jonson,** Ben Jonson (1574-1637) a great English dramatist.
 „ 29. **Etheridge.** Sir George Etheridge (1635?-1691) a noted wit, courtier and dramatist.
Southern. Thomas Southern (1660-1746) an Irishman who wrote plays and was a friend of Dryden and Pope.
 „ 30 **Wycherley.** William Wycherley (1640-1715), also a popular dramatist of the Restoration period.

- Line 35. **Fabius, etc.** Dryden is alluding to the incidents in the war between the Romans and the Carthaginians whom Scipio finally defeated at the battle of Zama in 202 B. C. The Consulship was given to him in 205 B. C.
- „ 39. **Romano.** Giulio Romano (1492-1546) a famous Italian painter, the friend and pupil of Raphael (1483-1520). Raphael was however taught by his own father and by Perugino.
- „ 45. **One Edward, etc.** Edward II and Edward III are alluded to.
- „ 48. **Tom the Second, etc.** Dryden had been replaced by Thomas Shadwell in his offices of Poet Laureate and Historiographer Royal. When Shadwell died in 1692 the office of Poet Laureate was given to Nahum Tate a man of no particular talent. One Thomas Rymer well-known as the Editor of Rymer's *Fœdera* a laborious collection of public documents still used by historians, became Historiographer. These were the two 'Toms' alluded to.
- „ 63. **To Shakespeare gave as much, etc.** Congreve was considered a man of the highest talent. Dr. Johnson characterised a passage in the *Mourning Bride* as the most poetical paragraph in the whole mass of English literature.

EDWARD YOUNG (1683—1765).

Young was the son of a well-known clergyman, who after being educated at Winchester and Oxford became a clergyman himself, though rather a worldly one. But though not very admirable as a man he wrote a certain amount of very popular poetry and had a happy knack of concentrating a good deal of philosophy in a single phrase.

FROM NIGHT THOUGHTS I.

- Line 7. Their pride (line 5) applauds their future selves.
- „ 9. **Vails.** Gratuities, presents. They spend the present foolishly, in the future they will act more wisely.
- „ 14. **All promise, etc.** Poor weak man is all promise and no performance.
- „ 26. **All men, etc.** This line is a good example of Young's power.
- „ 30. **Shaft.** The alarming shock of fate which strikes their hearts like an arrow.
- „ 31. **The wing.** The wings of a bird, and the feathers of an arrow, leave no impression on the air passed through.

- Line 36. **Philander.** This is supposed to be a certain Henry Temple who had married the daughter of Young's wife by a former husband.
- „ 43. **Philomel.** The nightingale.
- „ 47. **Wrapt in shade.** The poet himself in the night.
- „ 52. **Mœonides.** A name for Homer who is supposed to have been blind.
- „ 53. **Milton.** Milton was blind in his later life.
- „ 54. **Or his.** Pope's strain. Pope translated Homer into English and thus made him 'our own.'
- „ 55. **Man too he sung.** Pope wrote a famous *Essay on Man*.
- „ 58. **O had he, etc.** Oh that Pope had dealt with man after death etc. It may be said that Pope was not specially fitted for this task.

ALEXANDER POPE (1688—1744).

Pope was the son of a London linendraper. He was deformed in body and became a poet at a very early age. His best known poem is his *Essay on Man* but he also translated Homer and wrote much other excellent verse. His poetry shews the Eighteenth Century at its best, polished, clever, full of clear thinking and pointed sayings. Such poetry tended to become mechanical and it gave place (about 1800) to the verse of the new or Romantic School of which Wordsworth and Coleridge were the first great leaders. Still the poetry of Pope is interesting and stimulating. It makes one think and it pleases the ear.

EPISTLE TO ARBUTHNOT.

- Line 2. **My parents' or my own.** Pope probably has in mind the passage in the New Testament, St. John IX-2, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?"
- „ 5. **This idle trade.** The trade of literature.
- „ 9. **Arbuthnot.** John Arbuthnot (1667-1735), to whom this Epistle was addressed was a physician and a wit. He was the friend of Pope and Swift and enjoyed a large practice.
- „ 11. **Granville.** George Granville (1667—1735) afterwards Lord Lansdowne. A minor poet and dramatist.
- „ 12. **Walsh.** William Walsh (1663-1708) a wit and man of fashion who wrote verses. It was he who advised Pope to aim at correctness, and Pope followed his advice with conspicuous success.

- Line 13. **Garth.** Sir Samuel Garth (1661-1719) an amiable and famous physician who wrote a poem called '*The Dispensary*' and who found time to be kind to others besides Pope.
- „ 14. **Congreve.** William Congreve (1670-1729) the famous dramatist. Pope dedicated his translation of the *Iliad* to him.
- Swift.** Jonathan Swift (1667-1745). The most original genius of his age, possibly of any age. He wrote the well-known *Gulliver's Travels* and played an important part in the politics of Queen Anne's time.
- „ 15. **Talbot,** Charles Talbot (1660-1718) Duke of Shrewsbury. A statesman who took a great part in the Revolution of 1688 and in the accession of George I in 1713. He was originally a Whig, but became a Tory, though not a Jacobite.
- Somers.** John (1651-1716) Lord Somers. Another great politician who became Lord Chancellor in 1697. He had been one of the Counsels for the seven Bishops in their celebrated trial.
- Sheffield.** John Sheffield (1649-1722), who finally became Duke of Buckinghamshire, was a dabbler in literature as well as a statesman. He wrote an Essay on Poetry.
- „ 16. **Mitred Rochester.** Francis Atterbury (1662-1732) Bishop of Rochester. A Bishop wears a special head-dress called a mitre. Atterbury was a scholar, a wit and a Jacobite.
- „ 17. **St. John.** Henry St. John (1678-1751) Viscount Bolingbrooke, the famous statesman of Queen Anne's day. He negotiated the Treaty of Utrecht and fled abroad at the death of Queen Anne to the Pretender. Later he returned and was pardoned.
- Dryden.** Those mentioned were patrons and followers of the great poet Dryden.
- „ 22. **Burnets, etc.** Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, wrote a *History of my own Times*; John Oldmixon wrote a history of England which was popular; Thomas Cooke a more obscure writer had abused Pope.
- „ 25-26. Here Pope is making fun of Addison by imitating lines which occur in one of his poems.
- „ 27. **Gildon.** Charles Gildon (1665-1724) a hack writer who had attacked Pope. But Pope asserted that Addison had rewarded him for so doing which was not true.
- „ 29. **Dennis.** John Dennis (1657-1734) a critic and play writer whom Pope and his friends ridiculed, chiefly because he was poor and helpless.

- Line 32. **Bedlam.** A lunatic asylum.
- The Mint.** Usually a place where money is coined. Here used for the district in which insolvent debtors could walk about without being arrested.
- „ 34. **Kissed the rod.** Bowed to correction and acknowledged that it was just.
- „ 39. **Laurel.** Here 'one sprig of laurel' means 'one iota of genius.'
- „ 40. **Bentley.** Richard Bentley (1662-1742)* the famous Cambridge Scholar. He was a man of strong and masterful temper who loved controversy. He was perhaps the most distinguished amongst the many notable men who have held the office of Master of Trinity.
- Piddling Tibbalds.** Contemptible Theobalds. Lewis Theobald (1688-1744) was not a contemptible man at all. He was a sound Shakespearian scholar.
- „ 41. **Wight.** Fellow.
- „ 55. **The bard, etc.** Ambrose Philips (1675?-1749), a journalist, translator and poet, turned some Persian Tales into English and was said to work for half a crown a tale, though that was no fault of his. He was one of Addison's circle and hence Pope disliked him.
- „ 60. **Tate.** Nahum Tate (1652-1715) was but a feeble poet though he held the office of Poet Laureate.
- „ 69. **Peace, etc.** The lines which follow constitute perhaps the bitterest attack in the whole literary history of England. Pope is describing Joseph Addison, the famous founder of the Spectator, whom he calls Atticus. He was jealous of Addison and suspected that Addison had encouraged others to attack him. From all we know of Addison it seems unlikely that Pope had any justification for what he wrote. Many of the biting phrases have become familiar quotations.

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

- Line 4. The various names by which God was known amongst the Jews, the Romans, and the Christians.
- „ 5. **Great first cause.** God as the creative principle.
- „ 6. **Who, etc.** Who hast restricted my knowledge to this.
- „ 11. **And binding, etc.** While nature is subject to unchangeable laws man has free will.
- „ 15. **This** refers to line 14.
- „ 16. **That** refers to line 13.

- Line 20. **To enjoy is to obey.** If we receive and enjoy gifts of God we carry out His Will.
- „ 25. **Let not, etc.** This stanza is directed against presumption. We must not judge others. Let us leave that to God.
- „ 29. **If I am right, etc.** It is quite hard enough to do what is right and to keep from doing what is wrong. Let that be our business.
- „ 38. **To hide.** Charity, we read in the New Testament, 'covereth a multitude of sins.'
- „ 42. **Thy.** God's.

WILLIAM COLLINS (1720—1759).

Collins was a Sussex man. He was educated at Winchester and Oxford and published his famous Odes in 1746. He soon however became insane and hence was not able to fulfil the promise of his early years. He wrote enough however to shew that he was a true poet. He breaks away from the formal traditions and has thus been thought to have contributed to the arrival of the Romantic movement. The verses given were written during the war of Austrian Succession.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709—1784).

Samuel Johnson is, owing to the delightful biography of him written by his friend James Boswell, one of the best known characters in English literature. He was born at Lichfield and educated at school there and afterwards at Oxford. Soon afterwards he went to London and it is with the streets of literary London that his name will always be associated. He compiled a famous dictionary of the English Language, wrote a story called *Rasselas* and some very interesting Lives of the Poets. He was also something of a poet himself in the rather formal style of the Eighteenth century. But he is perhaps most famous on account of his conversation with his friends, and about that we learn in the Life by Boswell already mentioned.

FROM 'THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES.'

- Line 1. **Where then, etc.** Johnson has given a very striking picture of the troubles of life. We now have his conclusion. Is man to give up the struggle with fate?
- „ 7. **Inquirer cease.** No! says Johnson. Man can still pray for some things.
- „ 10. **Leave, etc.** But he must when he prays say "Thy will be done" and let the higher powers decide what shall be granted to him and how much of it.

- Line 12. **The Secret Ambush.** Johnson, like other Christians, was a strong believer in the efficacy of prayer. Secret ambush would seem to mean 'unseen power.' Specious means 'reasonable' here.
- „ 13. **His aid.** God's help.
- „ 17. **Pour forth, etc.** In this and the lines which follow Johnson, in lines that have been familiar to thousands of readers, tells us what we may reasonably pray for.
- Fer'ours.** Prayers.
- „ 19. **Love.** Here Johnson seems to allude to the love of God.
- „ 20. **Transmuted.** Changed. Patience can turn what seems at first sight evil into what is good for us.
- „ 22. **Counts death, etc.** A celebrated line.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. ROBERT LEVET.

- Line 1. **Hope's delusive mine.** A characteristic phrase. Johnson means that in this life we toil in a mine from which we expect much but receive little.
- „ 6. **Levet.** Robert Lévet was a poor man who lived with Dr. Johnson and who practised medicine in a humble way amongst the people who could not afford better advice in the neighbouring streets and alleys.
- „ 7. **Officious.** Here the word means ready to help; generally it means too ready to help.
- „ 10. **Coarsely.** Implies merely that, though a kindly man, Lévet had been brought up in a modest station in life.
- „ 16. **Of Art.** Of medical science.
- „ 27. **Th'eternal Master.** God.
- „ 28. **The single talent.** Cf. the note on Milton, Sonnet XVI, line 3.

THOMAS GRAY (1716—1771).

Gray was, like Milton, a Londoner and was educated at Eton and at Cambridge. He was a very learned man and after travelling abroad with Horace Walpole, son of the great Prime Minister, he settled permanently in Cambridge where he became a professor. He did not write much poetry but what he did write was of the very finest quality. His *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard* is perhaps one of the best known poems in the English language. That which follows has passages of great beauty especially the stanza beginning "Woods that wave o'er Delphi's Steep." The Progress of Poesy is called a Pindaric Ode, that term being used in Gray's time rather loosely for poems of a stately yet lyrical

nature rather different in form from the ordinary verse of the day. Pindar's Odes were Greek poems written to celebrate victories in the competitions at the great festivals where representatives from all Greece were present. They were usually sung to the accompaniment of music.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

Gray uses some Greek words as a motto which can perhaps best be understood if we give Dr. Sandys' translation of the whole passage in which they occur.

"Full many a swift arrow have I beneath mine arm, within my quiver, many an arrow *that is vocal to the wise; but for the crowd they need interpreters.* The true poet is he who knoweth much by gift of nature, but they that have only learnt the lore of song, and are turbulent and intemperate of tongue, like a pair of crows, chatter in vain against the god-like bird of Zeus."

The words used by Gray are in italics.

- Line 1. **Æolian Lyre.** The poet is supposed to be singing to the sound of a musical instrument. The Æolians were the Greeks who settled in Asia Minor.
- „ 3. **Helicon.** A mountain of Bœotia in Greece sacred to Apollo.
- „ 9. **Ceres.** Goddess of Agriculture.
- „ 15. **Shell.** The conch.
- „ 17. **Thracia.** Part of the Balkan Peninsula North-East of Constantinople.
- „ **Lord of War.** Mars.
- „ 21. **Feathered King.** The Eagle.
- „ 27. **Idalia.** A city in the island of Cyprus, sacred to Venus the Goddess of Love.
- „ 29. **Cytherea.** Another name for Venus.
- „ 36. **Their Queen.** Venus.
- „ 37. **Graces.** Three goddesses of beauty.
- „ 48. **Muse.** There were nine muses to whom the liberal arts, poetry, music, etc., were sacred.
- „ 53. **Hyperion.** The Sun as a divine person.
- „ 59. **Chili.** In Chile even we find poetry.
- „ 66. **Woods, etc.** But the true home of poetry is Greece, of which Gray now gives a very beautiful description.
- „ **Delphi.** The famous and sacred city where the oracle was found. It is in Phocis near the Corinthian Gulf.
- „ 68. **Ilissus.** A river of Attica in Greece.

- Line 69. **Mœander.** A wandering river of Asia Minor.
- „ 77. **Till, etc.** Till the Muses when Greece lost her freedom left the sacred mountain Parnassus in Greece and pass over to Italy. Latium is the old name of a part of North Italy.
- „ 82. **Albion.** From Italy the Muses pass to England of which Albion is an old name.
- „ 84. **Nature's Darling.** Shakespeare.
- „ 85. **Avon.** Shakespeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon in Warwickshire.
- „ 86. **Mighty Mother.** Nature.
- „ 95. **Nor second he, etc.** These lines refer to Milton and his blindness.
- „ 110. **Thoughts, etc.** Perhaps an allusion to Pope.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728—1774).

Goldsmith was born in Ireland where his father was a Protestant clergyman. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin where he took his degree a year later than Edmund Burke. After some years of wandering he settled in London where he was the friend of Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds and other eminent men. As a writer he was distinguished in three distinct departments. He was a poet, a writer of plays and a novelist. Whilst his poems belong in form to the days of Dryden and Pope, there is a sympathetic simplicity present in them which makes us realise that the change which Wordsworth and his followers introduced was not far distant.

THE TRAVELLER.

- Line 2. **Or by, etc.** The river Scheld may be described as lazy flowing as it does through flat countries into the North Sea; the Po's course is in the North of Italy.
- „ 3. **Carinthian boor.** A peasant of Carinthia, then a part of Austria.
- „ 5. **Campania.** A wide malarious plain in Italy, stretching away from Rome to the hills.
- „ 9. **My brother.** Goldsmith's brother Henry, a clergyman, to whom this poem is dedicated.
- „ 12. **Earliest friend.** His brother Henry.
- „ 49. **Tributary stores combine.** Teach me your lesson.
- „ 50. **Creation's heir.** Cf. Tennyson's "I the heir of all the ages."
- „ 84. **Idra's cliffs.** Perhaps Idra a mountain town in Gorizia Arno. A river in North Italy on which Florence stands.

- Line 105. **Apennine.** A chain of mountains running down the centre of the Italian Peninsula.
- „ 121. **Gelid.** Frozen, icy.
- „ 133. **And sqq.** In Goldsmith's time, Italy was divided into a number of small states. He contrasts her present position with the prosperity which reigned before the discovery of the Cape route to India, when Venice and Genoa were of greater commercial importance and the whole country was more wealthy.
- „ 144. **Plethoric ill.** Unhealthy repletion. There had been strength and prosperity but it was excessive and unnatural and therefore short-lived. Commerce passed into other channels.
- „ 150. **Pasteboard triumph, etc.** Goldsmith is linking of the religious processions on the one hand and the shows of the Carnival on the other.
- „ 159. **Cæsars.** The Roman Emperors.
- „ 181. **Costly.** Here extravagant. One who lives in a costly way.
- „ 187. **Trolls.** To troll is to tow an artificial bait for fish behind a boat. Here Goldsmith merely means fishes.
- „ 190. **Savage.** Bear, though it might be some other wild animal.
- „ 196. **Platter.** The vessels for eating, probably of pewter.
- „ 218. **Languid pause.** The quiet interval. The mind is cloyed with gross pleasures but has no finer ones to take their place.
- „ 232. **Indurated.** Made hard or unfeeling.
- „ 244. **Pipe.** Goldsmith used to play the flute and often in his early wanderings owed his bed and his supper to his musical skill.
- Loire.** A river in the centre of France, running West into the Bay of Biscay. It is famed for the quiet yet romantic scenery on its banks.
- „ 253. **Gestic lore.** The art of moving his body, that is of dancing.
- „ 276. **Frieze.** Woollen cloth of a coarse kind.
- „ 284. **Leans against the land.** In some parts of Holland the sea is higher in level than the land and is kept out by great dykes.
- „ 286. **Rampire.** Rampart.
- „ 296. **His reign.** The empire of the ocean.
- „ 313. **Belgic.** Goldsmith is thinking of the old Belgæ from whom some, but few, of the Dutch may be descended.

- Line 319. **Arcadian.** Ideally beautiful in a rustic sense. Arcadia is a mountainous region in the Peloponnesus in Greece.
- „ 320. **Hydaspes.** Now the river Jhelum in the Punjab.
- „ 327. **Pride, etc.** An oft quoted description of the 18th century squires such as Walpole.
- „ 381. **But when, etc.** Goldsmith was thinking of the struggles for office of the various sections of the Whig party during the first half of the 18th century.
- „ 392. **I fly, etc.** My hope lies in the monarchy as opposed to the factious political parties
- „ 407. **The Sire decayed.** The aged parent.
- „ 411. **Oswego.** The Oswego River runs into Lake Ontario in North America.
- „ 412. **Niagara.** The famous falls.
- „ 427. **In every Government, etc.** These lines are the most powerful in the whole poem and are constantly quoted. It is to be noted that line 420, as well as lines 429 to 434 and 437 and 438 are the work of Goldsmith's friend Dr. Johnson.
- „ 435. **The lifted axe.** Of the executioner.
- The agonizing Wheel.** Criminals in some countries used to be tied to a wheel and their bones broken by blows of an iron bar.
- „ 436. **Luke's Iron Crown.** Not Luke but George Dosa was punished for an insurrection in Hungary in the 16th century by having a red hot crown placed upon his head. Damien was a man who attempted to assassinate Louis XV of France and was put to death with fearful tortures. The bed of steel is perhaps the rack, perhaps the framework to which he was fastened.

ROBERT BURNS (1759—1796).

Burns was the greatest lyric poet that Scotland has produced. His life was short, troubled and obscure, and he was not without faults as he has frankly admitted.

What's done we partly may compute,
But not what is resisted.

He wrote some of the finest songs in the language and at the same time he preached the gospel of manly independence. His ideas of love are not those which those who live in India will understand, but as they are expressed in very passionate and beautiful verse some examples of his songs will be found here. They express the deepest feelings of the Scottish people, and at

the same time, they reach the highest level of artistic perfection that national poetry can attain to. And the beauty of these poems is enhanced by the naturalness and absence of effort which every line displays. The student must not be afraid of the dialect, for Burns who was a poor excise officer in the South West of Scotland wrote in the tongue that was spoken around him.

IS THERE FOR HONEST POVERTY.

- Line 4. **A'that.** All that.
 „ 8. **Gowd.** Gold.
 „ 10. **Hodden.** Coarse cloth made of wool.
 „ 11. **Gi'e.** Give.
 „ 17. **Birkie.** Fellow who gives himself airs.
 Ca'd. Called.
 „ 20. **Coof.** A silly fellow.
 „ 22. **Riband.** Order, decoration.
 „ 27. **Aboon.** Above.
 „ 28. **Maunna fa'.** Must not try.
 „ 36. **Gree.** Here, the victory.

HIGHLAND MARY.

This poem was written to commemorate the parting of the poet with Mary Campbell, who was to have been his wife, in 1786. She died however the same year.

- Line 4. **Drumlie.** Thick, dirty, muddy.
 „ 5. **Simmer.** Summer.
 „ 9. **Birk.** The birch tree.
 „ 18. **Fu'.** Full.

OF A'THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW.

Written to his wife whose name was originally Jean Armour.

- Line 1. **A'the airts.** All the directions.
 „ 4. **Lo'e.** Love.
 „ 5. **Row.** Roll along.
 „ 14. **Shaw.** A little wood between the hills

Æ FOND KISS.

This passionate and beautiful love song was written in 1791. It contains, it has been said, a whole romance in its few tragic lines.

Line 1. **Æ.** One.

Lines 13-16. These are the most famous lines perhaps that Burns wrote. Byron quotes them as a motto for the Bride of Abydos.

Line 19. **Ilka.** Every.

WILLIAM COWPER (1731—1800).

Cowper, born in Hertfordshire, was educated like Warren Hastings at Westminster. His grandfather was Lord Chancellor and he was naturally intended for the law. His mind however early shewed traces of weakness. He passed a peaceful retired life, broken by intervals of insanity, chiefly in the country. He translated Homer and wrote much charming verse; as a letter writer he was in the first rank. *John Gilpin*, the most popular of his poems, is in the pleasantest vein of humour.

JOHN GILPIN.

Line 3. **A train band Captain.** A Captain of the corps of citizen soldiers of London.

Eke. Also.

„ 5. **Spouse.** Wife.

„ 11. **The Bell.** The name of a country Inn.

Edmonton. A village in John Gilpin's day quite outside London.

„ 12. **Chaise.** A hired carriage.

„ 21. **Linendraper.** Seller of linen.

„ 23. **Calender.** One who pressed and finished cloth for sale.

„ 39. **Agog.** Ready.

„ 44. **Cheapside.** An old and famous Street in London.

„ 59. **Betty.** The name of the maid-servant.

„ 64. **Exercise.** Drill with the train bands.

„ 97. **Neck or naught.** Neck or nothing. As hard as he could.

„ 98. **Wig.** All men of the middle and upper classes wore wigs at this time.

„ 99. **Rig.** Fashion or appearance.

„ 119. **Turnpike men.** The men who kept the turnpikes or gates on the roads where one had to pay to pass through. The money kept the roads in order.

- Line 128. **Basted.** To 'baste is to pour gravy over roasting meat.
 „ 133. **Merry Islington.** Islington was then a suburb of London. Now it is a part of London itself.
 „ 135. **The Wash.** A place where a stream ran over the road.
 „ 150. **Tarry.** Wait.
 „ 152. **Ware.** A country town near London.
 „ 172. **Guse.** Fashion, or way.
 „ 178. **Pin.** Mood, humour.
 „ 230. **Post-boy.** The post-boy rode one of the two horses that pulled the chaise.
 „ 236. **Hue and cry.** Outcry, shouting after criminals.
 „ 237. **Highway man.** A robber on the public roads.
 „ 243. **Toll-men.** Another name for the men who collected the tolls at the toll bar gates on the turnpike roads.

LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS.

- Line 9. **Saints.** Here believers in God and in the divine direction of the world.
 „ 10. **Clouds.** Troubles which we fear will come.
 „ 22. **His work.** The work of God. God rules the universe for our good and He will make the fact clear to us in time.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772—1835).

Coleridge was a Devonshire man and was educated at Christ's Hospital and Jesus College, Cambridge. He was an extraordinary boy and man; very ill adapted for life's battles, but learned, philosophical, and one of England's greatest poets. He was a friend of Wordsworth and joined with him in the famous Lyrical Ballads which appeared in 1798. It was in that collection that the wonderful poem, *The Ancient Mariner* appeared. It describes the adventures of a sailor in the olden times and contains many passages of very great beauty. Coleridge had a remarkably fine ear for the music of words and that made him a very sound critic of his own as well as of other people's poetry.

THE ANCIENT MARINER.

- Line 9. **He holds.** The Ancient Mariner holds.
 „ 12. **Eftsoons.** An old word for 'at once'.

- Line 21. **Cheered.** Cheered by the people on shore as she left
 „ 23. **Kirk,** Church. Here the Church Tower.
 „ 32. **Bassoon.** A large brass musical wind instrument.
 „ 36. **Minstrelsy.** The band of musicians.
 „ 46. **As who.** As one who.
 „ 55. **Clifts.** Cliffs.
 „ 56. **Sheen.** A kind of transfused brightness.
 „ 57. **We ken.** We know.
 „ 62. **Like noises, etc.** Like noises one hears when one is
 in a swoon.
 „ 76. **Vesp^{ers}.** Evenings. Vespers is the name of the
 evening service in the Church.
 „ 79. **God save thee.** This is said by the wedding guest.
 „ 81. **With my cross bow.** This is said by the Ancient
 Mariner.
 „ 83. **The sun, etc.** The ship was now sailing North.
 „ 98. **Uprist.** 'Rose up', an old form.
 „ 133. **Nine fathom, etc.** Nine fathoms below the surface of
 the sea.
 „ 152. **Wist.** Knew.
 „ 163. **Agape.** With open mouth.
 „ 178. **Heaven's mother.** The blessed Virgin, Mother of Jesus
 Christ.
 „ 184. **Gossamers.** Gossamer is a spider's web. The sails
 seemed mere threads.
 „ 194. **Who thicks, etc.** Freezes men to death.
 „ 223. **Like the Whiz, etc.** He means like the whiz of the
 bolt from his cross bow.
 „ 254. **Reek.** Smell.
 „ 302. **Dank.** Wet, soaked.
 „ 312. **Sere.** Dry.
 „ 314. **Sheen.** Shone.
 „ 319. **Sedge.** Reeds by the water.
 „ 325. **Jag.** A ragged edge.
 „ 362. **Jargon^{ing}.** Making various sounds.
 „ 394. **I have not, etc.** I will not say.
 „ 399. **By him who died on Cross.** By Christ.
 „ 470. **O let me, etc.** He can hardly believe that he is at
 home again.
 „ 489. **Holy rood.** The Cross on which Christ suffered.

- Line 490. **Seraph-man.** An angel.
- „ 491. **Corse.** Corpse, body.
- „ 507. **The dead men, etc.** Even the presence of the dead men could not take away my joy.
- „ 512. **Shrieve.** Shrive, that is hear my confession of sin and give me absolution.
- „ 520. **Plump.** Means fat and soft; we expect luxury but find that the cushion on which the worthy hermit kneels is merely the **gnoss** on a stump.
- „ 524. **Why this, etc.** The talk of the men in the boat.
- „ 533. **Lag.** Literally to linger.
- „ 535. **Ivy-tod.** Ivy bush. Ivy is an evergreen climbing plant with large leaves.
- „ 536. **Owlet.** Small owl.
- „ 559. **Telling.** 'Echoing' here.
- „ 565. **Go.** Here means 'lives'. The boy went mad and had remained so.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770—1850).

It may be said of Wordsworth that he was born on the lap of Nature and grew up under Nature's most ennobling influences. He delighted in making long walking tours in the Scottish Highlands and the people who most appealed to him were the simple folk whom he met in those places, so remote from towns. They made him think deeply on the essential beauty and nobility of human life lived in close contact with Nature. After taking his degree at Cambridge, he resided for a year in France—attracted by the ideals of the French Revolution. But his high hopes for mankind were dashed to the ground when he saw the excesses which followed the Revolution. He remained a recluse, more or less, though, from his retreat, he watched public events and occasionally expressed his views on them in writing.

Wordsworth stands pre-eminent among English poets not only by the high quality of his best poetry but also by the fact that he was the accepted leader in turning back English poetry from the unpoetic subjects and prosaic spirit of the 18th century poets. When he is not dealing with very grave subjects or indulging in philosophic reflection, his poetry often has a golden simplicity and a freshness and charm such as can go only with the highest poetic work. He belonged to the great group of Romantic Poets which also included Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats. But his power lay not so much in dealing with remote and unfamiliar subjects as in revealing the beauty and wonder that lie hidden in common things and common people. Thus it was that he helped to reawaken wonder which was the distinctive work of the Romantic School of poets.

THERE WAS A BOY.

The poem illustrates vividly how the impressions received from Nature may sink deeply in man's mind. This living presentation of Nature was Wordsworth's great contribution to English poetry. Nature appealed to Wordsworth's moral sense, to Keats's sense of beauty, to Shelley's passion for freedom.

Line 2. **Winander.** Lake Windermere on the borders of Westmoreland and Lancashire.

Lines 14-16. **Screams..... din.** The lines are full of varied sound and almost echo the jocund din of the hooting.

„ 18-21. **Then, sometimes.....torrents.** These lines, with their subdued quietness, form a striking contrast to the preceding ones. They should be read slowly, with pauses.

Line 26. **This boy was taken, etc.** Wordsworth tells us that the boy was one William Raincock whom he knew. But the experiences of Wordsworth's own boyhood must have been not unlike those of the boy in the poem.

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

A charming bit of romantic musing started by the impression made on the poet's mind by the loneliness of the reaper and the touch of melancholy in her song. In reading the poem stress the words 'single' (1) 'gently' (4) 'alone' (5) 'melancholy' (6) and 'what' (17).

Line 16. **Farthest Hebrides.** The Hebrides are a cluster of islands in the north-west of Scotland. 'Farthest' suggests a vague idea of remoteness.

„ 17. **What she sings.** The poet is still under the spell of her song.

THE DAFFODILS.

In these melodious lines the poet tells us how, in his lonely wanderings, he suddenly found the joyous *companionship* of the daffodils.

Line 18. **What wealth... brought.** Namely, as the poet goes on to tell us, a store of recollected enjoyment.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802.

The Sonnet was written after the poet's return from France in 1802, where he had seen the devastation caused by the French Revolution. The 'empty parade' of city life jarred upon him

He wrote the poem in a mood of depression. But his noble rebuke is well worth attention at all times and in all countries.

Two pictures are here—that of a society which is satisfied with the external things of life, such as wealth can buy, which is ruled by greed and extravagance and which finds its reward in the envy of others; and that of a society which thinks less of making a show, which draws freshness and strength from Nature and from the wisdom of the past; which loves peace and which is saved from recklessness by following the dictates of religion.

ODE TO DUTY.

This noble poem is built round the following ideas :—

- (1) Man may act either from his own genial impulse or in obedience to an external law of conduct revealed by the conscience as a divine mandate. This law is the law of duty.
- (2) So long as man is yet uncorrupted, his impulse may be a safe guide. As he begins to lose confidence in himself he seeks the guidance and support of duty.
- (3) The same divine law that preserves order in the physical world, in another aspect, preserves order in the moral world, the world of conduct.

- Line 1. **Daughter of the Voice of God.** Duty is divine command or, rather, the echo of that command in the conscience.
- Lines 3-4. **Guide, check, reprove.** The three functions of the conscience.
- Line 37. **Me this unchartered freedom tires.** Freedom of action unlimited by any guiding rule makes the responsibility too heavy to bear.
- „ 42. **The Godhead's most benignant grace.** Referring to the comforting sense of divine approval.
- Lines 45-46. **Flowers.....treads.** The sense that one is going to do one's duty is a satisfaction in itself and the sense that duty has been done is a deeper satisfaction.

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.

The perfect wife is at the same time a queen of romance, a helpmate in the daily joys and sorrows of home and a spiritual companion or twin-soul. These three aspects of her character are perceived one after another but in their mingling consists the perfection of womanhood.

- Line 10. **To haunt, to startle, and waylay.** These words express, somewhat too strongly, the first shock of love while still uncomprehended.

- Line 16. **Sweet records, promises as sweet.** The impress of a happy past which is also the assurance of a happy future.
- „ 18. **Human nature's daily food.** That which a man wants from day to day.
- „ 22. **The very pulse of the machine.** This line is a sad flaw in the poem.

REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

Susan has come to London from her home in the country to earn her living. 'One morning, amid the crowded streets of the city, the song of a thrush reminds her of the home she has left; and for a moment she stands dreaming of the past. The crowded streets of London fade from her eyes and the happy scenes of her childhood slowly pass before her vision.

- Line 5. **Ails her.** Affects her. Note the dramatic effect of the question.
- „ 6. **Mountains ascending.** Visionary scenes of her home in the country.
- Lines 7-8. **Lothbury...Cheapside.** The busy quarter of the city where she is standing.

STEPPING WESTWARD.

The poet and his sister were out walking in the Scottish Highlands. A girl whom they met accosted them with the question 'Are you stepping Westward?' which in the local dialect is said to mean 'Are you going far?' The western sky was at the time aglow with the setting sun and the thought of a journey 'westward' which the question seemed to suggest pleased his fancy as the kindly tone of interest touched his heart. Such was the germ of this beautiful poem.

- Line 2. **Wildish.** Strange, adventurous
- „ 24. **Human sweetness** A sense of assurance arising from kindly human interest and hospitality.

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS.

The sweetness of the girl is due entirely to her association with Nature. The simplicity of the language is in perfect harmony with the subject. Note also the restraint with which the poet expresses his love.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771—1832).

Scott was a good and warm-hearted man. He is best known as the writer of the Waverly Novels but he began as a poet and has left behind poetic work which, though not very deep or spiritual, makes very pleasant reading. Unlike Tennyson in later times Scott was fond of unchecked flow rather than careful workmanship, and unlike Browning he was a painter of action rather than a painter of the soul. He was a great story-teller, both in poetry and in prose, and his character is reflected in the freshness and clearness of his writings. He loved the life of romantic adventure that is associated with the knights of the middle ages and tried to picture it in vivid colours.

SOUND, SOUND THE CLARION.

Four characteristic lines of Scott. They sound like a rousing trumpet-blast.

BRIGNAL BANKS.

The outlaw tries to undeceive the maiden as to his real character but she is blinded by love. She will not give up her dream.

- Line 4. **Summer Queen.** That is Queen of May. As a part of the festivities with which the spring was ushered in on the first day of May, the fairest girl in the village was crowned with flowers as Queen of May.
- „ 11. **I'd rather rove, etc.** She prefers to wander in sweet forest solitudes with her love.
- „ 17. **That riddle read.** Make out from my hint the real truth about the life I lead.
- „ 21. **Yet.** This word should be stressed in reading.
- „ 27. **Ranger.** A keeper of the king's forest.
- „ 41. **No more.** Implying that he was once in the army.
- „ 43. **When the beetle.....hum.** Compare Shakespeare's lines—
 The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
 Hath rung night's yawning peal.
- Macbeth III. 2
- „ 46. **Maiden a nameless life, etc.** Note the touch of melancholy in this stanza.
- „ 47. **Mickle.** Much.
- „ 48. **My Queen of May.** 'My' is emphatic.
- „ 51. **The fiend.....mead.** Jack o' the Lantern.

COUNTY GUY.

This pretty song is very popular. It is a serenade sung by a maiden waiting for her lover. The hour of meeting is come: all nature shows it. But where is County Guy?

County. Count.

THE LAST MINSTREL.

We have here a moving picture of an aged minstrel, the last survivor of his race. The minstrels were wandering bards who went from castle to castle and sang in rude but spirited, and often improvised, verse of the great deeds of the noble chief and of his ancestors. They were everywhere received hospitably and rewarded for their services. The changed conditions of society which form the background of the picture together with his age and loneliness touch with pathos the figure of the last minstrel.

Line 20. **A stranger.** William III.

„ 21. **The bigots of the iron time.** The Puritans of the time of the Commonwealth.

„ 22. **Crime.** Referring to the ordinance passed in the time of Cromwell (1656) by which minstrels were classed with rogues, vagabonds and sturdy beggars and were forbidden to play or sing in inns, alehouses or taverns.

„ 32. **Embattled.** Surmounted by battlements.

„ 33. **Grate.** Portcullis.

„ 37. **The Duchess.** Anne, the first Duchess of Buccleuch and of Monmouth, widow of James, Duke of Monmouth, beheaded in 1685 after his unsuccessful rebellion against James II.

„ 49. **Earl Francis.** Father of the Duchess.

„ 50. **Walter.** Grand-father of the Duchess.

„ 62. **Room of State.** The hall or assembly room of the castle.

„ 73. **According glee.** Joyous and harmonious note.

„ 80. **King Charles the good.** King Charles I, so called for his sad fate.

„ 81. **Holyrood.** The king's palace at Edinburgh.

PROUD MAISIE.

'Proud' is emphatic and strikes the keynote of the poem. The poet presents a maiden in the pride of her youth and beauty and full of romantic fancies—not suspecting that death is near

at hand. Note the simplicity and directness of the dramatic manner of presentation.

- Line 1. **Maisie.** Scottish form of 'Mary.'
 „ 7. **Braw.** Fine-looking.

ROBERT SOUTHEY (1774—1843).

Southey was a voluminous writer in prose and verse but poetry was not his chief delight.

THE SCHOLAR.

There is no high poetic quality in these lines. Their saving grace is the spirit of sincerity that pervades them. In these words, so full of feeling, the poet speaks of his own studious life, its joys and its rewards.

- Line 1. **The dead.** That is the immortal dead; famous authors.
 „ 2. **Around . . . behold.** The lines were "written in his library."
 „ 6. **Converse.** Commune. Compare Keat's poem "Bards of Passion and of Mirth."

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR (1775—1864).

Landor was pre-eminent as a writer of imaginative prose. He imbibed the classical culture of his time at Rugby and Oxford and by temperament he was more an old Roman than an Englishman. For twenty years he resided in Italy. Whether in Italy or in England, where he settled on his return, he took little interest in what was going on around him but remained aloof living in "a past world of heroic thought." The two short poems selected here are marked by grace, clearness and perfection of form and both are conceived and written in the old classical manner.

ROSE AYLMER.

- Line 1. **What avails, etc.** Because they could not save her from death.
The sceptered race. The noble descent. Rose Aylmer was a daughter of the fourth Baron of Aylmer.

ON HIMSELF.

- Line 1. **I strove with none . . . strife.** Note the spirit of haughty aloofness. This was the attitude that Landor maintained throughout his life.

- Line 3. **I warmed both hands, etc.** Life is compared to a sort of camp fire at which one warms himself for a time before the coldness of death comes.

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE (1775—1841).

Blanco White was born in Spain but came to England in 1810 and resided for sometime at Oxford. He wrote some poetry of which the sonnet here selected is the best known.

TO NIGHT.

One of the most splendid night pieces in English literature. The *revealing* powers of night suggest to the poet's mind the possible revealing powers of death. Daylight, while showing even minute objects, conceals the grandest part of creation, the starry world. So earthly life thrusts into notice what is trivial but blinds us to the sublime realities of eternal life.

- Lines 3-4. **Did he not.....blue.** Did not Adam feel afraid that the beautiful day with all the splendour of its bright blue over-arching sky once gone might never return?

- Line 7. **Hesperus.** The evening star.

- „ 8. **Widened.** Revealed itself in its vastness.

THOMAS CAMPBELL (1777—1844).

Campbell was a Scotchman. He was a popular poet in his day though the new notes of romantic poetry are not distinctly heard in his work. He has been rather forgotten at the present time but his war pieces, of which *The Battle of the Baltic* is the best, are sure to live.

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

A battle piece full of martial vigour and patriotic feeling. It presents the successive phases of the Battle of the Baltic, a sea-fight which took place off Copenhagen on April 2, 1801, Sir Hyde Parker and Nelson defeating the Danish fleet.

- Line 8 **The Prince.** The Crown Prince of Denmark.

- „ 10. **Leviathans.** The battle ships are compared to huge monsters of the deep. In the English Bible the word is used for the whale. Cf. Milton's *Paradise Lost* I, 201.

- „ 26. **Hurricane eclipse.** As the sun is obscured by a violent storm.

- „ 63. **Elsinore.** A Danish seaport.

- Line 67. **Riou.** Who, commanded the smaller vessels under Nelson.
70. **Mermaid's song.** The introduction of this classical convention mars the impression of reality that the poem gives.

THOMAS MOORE (1779—1852).

Moore was a warm-hearted Irishman. He was a good singer and had a true lyric gift. He came to London in 1799 and became popular in fashionable society. The shallowness and tawdriness that we find in some of the work of Moore are not found in the poem selected here which is full of deep and genuine feeling for his college friend Robert Emmet.

PRO PATRIA MORI.

Robert Emmet was an Irish patriot with a noble gift of oratory. On his return from France, after interviewing Napoleon in 1802, he headed an unsuccessful patriotic rising in Dublin. In this rising his followers committed such crimes of violence that he fled broken-hearted but was arrested when on a visit to the girl he loved and was executed in September 1803.

Title **Pro Patria Mori**—part of a famous line from Horace,—“*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*,” it is sweet and honourable *to die for the fatherland*.

- Line 1. **Thee.** Addressing his fatherland, Ireland.
- Name.** Memory.
- „ 3. **Thou.** Emphatic. Whatever his enemies may say the tears of his country will wash off all reproach.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM (1784—1842).

Cunningham as a poet is remembered chiefly for this rollicking sea-song, the finest in English literature.

A WET SHEET AND A FLOWING SEA.

- Line 1. **Sheet.** Collectively used for the ropes by which the sails are handled.
- Flowing sea.** Waves that rise high.
- „ 8. **Lee.** The side sheltered from the wind.
- „ 10. **Fair one.** Some lady among the passengers.
- „ 14. **Tight.** That is, water-tight.
- „ 17. **In the horned moon.** Indicated by the crescent moon

GEORGE GORDON NOEL, LORD BYRON (1788—1824).

Byron was for a time lionised and then cruelly ill-used by his countrymen and both were bad for his passionate and sensitive nature. In 1816, after separation from his wife, he left England never to return. He had begun to write poetry as a boy and soon gave evidence of his powers of satire and of elastic expressiveness of style. He brought into English poetry "titanic" passion. His love of freedom was as great as Shelley's but it was enriched by a sense of the march of history. He is at his grandest when he writes in a mood of lofty meditation while the panorama of history passes slowly before his vision. To him the lighter graces and more delicate touches of poetry did not come so easily as a majestic sweep of imagination sustained by an adequate style.

VENICE.

(From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto IV.)

Line 1. **I stood in Venice, etc.** Venice when Byron visited it, was decayed, but he is looking at it with the visionary eye of history.

On the Bridge of Sighs. A famous bridge of Venice leading from the Doge's palace to the state prison, so called because condemned prisoners were conducted over it from the judgment hall to the place of execution. Venice is built on more than a hundred islands at the head of the Adriatic. The canals, which are spanned by many bridges are the streets of Venice and the pretty gondolas are the cabs.

„ 4. **As from the stroke, etc.** The spires and cupolas of Venice rose in dream-like beauty.

„ 6. **A dying glory smiles.** The brilliant past of Venice which sweeps across the memory is compared to a bright light that slowly fades away.

Lines 7-8. **Many a subject.....piles.** Venice's subjects on the Dalmatian coast and in the island of Crete were under the Doge near whose palace stood the winged lion of St. Mark the emblem of the power of the state. St. Mark was the patron saint of Venice.

Line 10. **Like a sea Cybele.** Cybele, the great Phrygian goddess was represented as wearing a mural crown. Venice was seen rising from the sea like a sea-goddess but she wore a crown of beautiful palaces.

„ 13. **Their powers.** The minor water deities, perhaps symbolising here the power acquired by Venice as she rose to maritime greatness.

- Lines 15-16. **The exhaustless East poured on her lap, etc.** Before the discovery of the Cape route to Asia, Venice, on account of her position, commanded the commerce carried on with the rich eastern countries. Compare Wordsworth's line "held the gorgeous East in fee."
- Line 19. **Tasso's echoes are no more.** Tasso was a famous Italian poet of the 16th century and was so popular that even the gondoliers, it is said, recited his verses as they rowed their boats.
- „ 27. **The revel..... masque of Italy.** The place which drew pleasure seekers from all parts of Europe to its masked revelry.
- Lines 28-29. **Unto .. in story.** To Englishmen, lovers of Shakespeare and Otway, who laid the scenes of some of their dramas in Venice, the city has poetic associations as well as historical.
- Line 30. **Shadows.** Of the great Doges of Venice.
- „ 31. **Dogeless City.** With the loss of Venice's freedom has gone the Doge, the Duke or chief officer of the Republic.
- „ 32. **Ours is a trophy, etc.** The Doges of history have become dim shadows but the persons created by poetic imagination, like Shylock of the *Merchant of Venice*, Othello of the play named after him and Pierre of *Venice Preserved*, together with their associates, will remain ever fresh and living in the memory.
- „ 33. **Rialto.** A famous bridge over the Grand Canal of Venice.
- „ 37. **The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord.** Once every year the Doge went out in the state galley, the *Bucentaur*, and, with many ceremonies, dropped a ring into the Adriatic, thus wedding the sea, as it were, in token of Venice's maritime supremacy. Read Wordsworth's Sonnet "On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic."
- „ 43. **Place where an Emperor sued.** Frederick Barbarossa, Duke of Suavia and head of the Holy Roman Empire, as the revived Western Roman Empire came to be called. In the constant quarrels between the Emperors and the Popes that marked the history of the Holy Roman Empire the Emperor had often to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope. But never was Emperor so abased as when Frederick made his submission to Pope Alexander III in Venice in front of the Church of St. Mark laying aside his royal robes and prostrating himself at the Pope's feet.

- Line 46. **Now the Austrian reigns.** As Venice was given to Austria at the parcelling out of Europe by Napoleon in 1815.
- Lines 49-51. **Nations melt.....while.** A splendid metaphor from an avalanche. Prosperity softens the hardihood of a nation and makes it fall. 'Lawine' is a German word for an avalanche.
- „ 53-54. **O for one hour.foe.** In 1204, during the fourth crusade, Henry Dondalo, Doge of Venice, said to have been more than ninety years of age at the time and blind, led in person an attack on Byzantium (Constantinople). Byron wishes for a return of those stirring times.

THE CASTLE OF CHILLON.

The Castle of Chillon stands at the eastern extremity of Lake Geneva in Switzerland. It was formerly used as a state prison.

- Line 1. **Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind.** The body can be chained but the mind is free by nature.
- „ 13. **Bonnivard.** A Swiss patriot of the 16th century who suffered for resisting the tyranny of the Duke of Savoy. He was imprisoned for two years and then released. But as he persisted in opposing the Duke he was again arrested and imprisoned and for four years he was shut up in an underground cell. Read Byron's famous poem *The Prisoner of Chillon*.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792—1822).

Shelley, like Byron and Landor, came from the upper classes of society. He was a born lyric poet if ever there was one and he carried his incurably poetic disposition to the practical affairs of life with the result that he did not make of it much of a success. Even in his writings his meaning is often "hidden in the light" of his iridescent fancy. His diffuseness and his inability to hold fast to definite images are seen in some of the poems selected here; but so are his ethereal imagination, his pure melody and the intrinsic nobility of his nature. From 1813 Shelley lived in various places in Italy, till his death by drowning in the gulf of Spezia on July 8, 1822.

TO A SKYLARK.

- Line 2. **Wert.** Couldst be.
- „ 5. **Unpremeditated.** A big word beautifully balanced on the stream of melody.

- Line 8. **Cloud of fire.** A speck of bright cloud (lit up by the rays of the sun); or, perhaps, a burst of flame.
- „ 12. **Sunken sun.** Yet unrisen sun.
- „ 15. **Like an unbodied joy.....began.** Like a happy soul not yet imprisoned in (or just released from) a material body. **Race**—fresh career.
- Lines 21-22. **The arrows.....sphere.** The rays of the moon. 'Arrows' is suggestive of the huntress Diana, one form of the moon goddess.
- Line 33. **Rainbow clouds.** Clouds studded with the rainbow.
- Lines 36-37. **Like a poet.....thought.** Like a poet who presents his ideas from behind his glittering *fancies*.
- Line 41. **Like a high born maiden, etc.** Note how simile comes after simile struck off by the glowing imagination of the poet, some of them vague and impalpable, but all of them beautiful.
- „ 49. **Aerial hue.** Blue light.
- „ 51. **Like a rose embowered, etc.** The rose is represented as a beautiful maiden in her bower wooed by the winds.
- „ 55. **Heavy-winged thieves.** The winds drooping with the sweet burden of the perfume.
- „ 58. **Rain-awakened.** Freshened by the rain.
- „ 66. **Chorus hymenial.** Nuptial songs, Hymen being the god of marriage.
- „ 67. **Triumphal chant.** Songs in praise of the victor.
- „ 69. **Empty vaunt.** A hollow parade.
- „ 71. **Fountains.** Sources of inspiration.
- „ 82. **Thou of death must deem, etc.** Your intuitions about death must be deeper and truer than man's, for to *him* death is an overshadowing mystery.
- „ 86. **We look before and after.** We think of what was in the past but is not, and we think of what is now but may not be in the future.
- „ 90. **Sweetest songs.** Those that most touch our hearts, because they harmonise with our own experience.
- „ 103. **Harmonious madness.** Ecstatic strains of joy.

OZYMANDIAS OF EGYPT.

The subject of this sonnet is that earthly greatness and the pride that goes with it—both pass away. Both the name and the inscription were invented by Shelley.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND.

This magnificent poem was "conceived and chiefly written" in 1819 in a wood near Florence when the west wind was actually rising. Note how the grand music of the poem fits the sweep of the thought. The west wind disperses the dry leaves which are dead and deposits the seeds which become the sources of new life and beauty when spring calls them forth.

Lines 3-5. **Like ghosts.....multitudes.** The spotted leaves of autumn are compared to the spirits of men who have died in a great pestilence.

Line 9. **Azure sister of the spring.** The *spring* breeze that blows under a clear blue sky.

Lines 9-12. **Blow her clarion.....plain and hill.** A rather confused metaphor. The call of the spring is compared to an angel's trumpet awakening the seeds to life and to the sound of a shepherd's pipe driving out the buds like a flock of sheep.

„ 15-17. **Thou on whose stream.....ocean.** Another bold metaphor. The west wind is spoken of as an aerial river flowing between earth and sky which mingling in the storm are conceived as one great forest. At the horizon where sky and earth seem to meet the boughs of the trees intermingle. The clouds that are driven before the wind are like leaves shed by the trees of the sky on the river.

Line 18. **Angels.** Used in the original sense of 'messengers'.

Lines 20-23. **Like the bright hair.....approaching storm.** Another change of metaphor for the storm clouds. The long line of clouds emerging from the horizon is as it were the uplifted hair of the storm-spirit; and the storm-spirit is compared to one of the frenzied priestesses of Dionysius (Bachus).

„ 23-27. **Thou dirge.....vapours.** A metaphor for the darkening sky, the storm-charged atmosphere and the wild wail of the rising wind. The year is dying; the west wind sings the funeral hymn; the earth over-laid with the gathering vapours is the grave; the sky is the dome of the sepulchre.

„ 29-36. **Thou who didst waken.....picturing them.** From the fierce images and wild music of the first part of the poem the poet passes with charming effect to an image of peaceful beauty and to a strain of flute-like melody. He is speaking of the Mediterranean before the storm began to ruffle it. The blue waters, as one might see them round some pumice isle in the Bay of Naples, were sleeping, as the streams that flow into them made soft music. Perchance the waters were dreaming of past scenes.

- Lines 36-41. **Thou for whose path.....fear.** The upper waters of the Atlantic make way for the march of the storm and the terror of it reaches even the dull-coloured sea-weeds below.
- Line 43. **If I were a dead leaf, etc.** Like the leaves and the clouds and the waves the poet wants to feel the impulse of the storm's uncontrollable power. Like the storm, he also is uncontrollable and proud by nature but now he needs the inspiration of the west wind for the experiences of life have subdued him.
- „ 57. **Make me thy lyre, etc.** The poem was written in 1819 when Shelley was 27 years old. Like all impetuous natures he was subject to fits of dejection. He felt that he was ageing. In blowing through the forest in autumn the majestic harmonies of the west wind acquire a touch of sadness. Perhaps they also acquire a deeper appeal on that account. But the west wind also casts far and wide the leaves and seeds of autumn out of which the spring is to come. So may the poet's impetuous spirit find expression in his poetry though now somewhat subdued by the touch of age and experience. So may his words, still warm with awakening power, be scattered far and wide among mankind and bring about the rejuvenation of humanity.

MUSIC WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE.

When sweet things are taken from us they are still cherished and kept alive in the memory. So when the beloved is gone her thoughts will survive. And love will rest on these thoughts as a bride lies upon a bed on which rose-leaves are strewn.

JOHN KEATS (1795—1821).

Keats died in 1821 at the age of twenty-five and the poetic work he has left remains a wonder on account of its beauty and, more, on account of the promise of future greatness that it contains. He was the son of a livery stable keeper's employee and himself came to be apprenticed to a surgeon. He lost his parents early, had to fight against adverse circumstances, conceived a hopeless passion for a girl and developed consumption to which in spite of a change to Italy he succumbed. On his grave in Rome are inscribed words of his own choosing: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water". Yet to this suffering youth who never went to a University came a noble gift of poetry. To him was given the perfect phrasing for the like of which we must go to Shakespeare himself; to him was given melody which is the despair of conscious art. And for the rest he was drunken with

the beauty of nature, with the beauty of 'old legend, the beauty of older poetry, such as Spenser's. Indeed the dream of beauty was his only mode of escape from the bitter realities of life. In some of his poetic work there is immaturity. It is the immaturity of high genius and Keats died when he was twenty-five. If, as Keats himself says, "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever," his own poetry will prove the truth of his saying.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

The poem was written during the poet's stay with a friend in whose garden a nightingale had built its nest. Keats listened to its song with keen enjoyment and one morning took his chair to the garden and wrote this wonderful poem.

The central idea is this: The poet wants to escape from the miseries of the world by being united in spirit, as it were, with the nightingale, whose song seems to him an imperishable thing of beauty. The communion is effected for a moment by means of poetic imagination and he gives himself up to the tranquil enjoyment. Then the trance breaks and as the bird flies away from its leafy covert, with vain yearning the poet's mind follows it past the near meadows, over the hill-stream, up the hill side, till it is buried in the next valley glades.

- Line 4. **Lethewards.** Into a swoon, the Lethe being supposed to be a river of Hell, the waters of which made the drinker forget joy and sorrow.
- „ 7. **Dryad.** The very spirit of the woodlands.
- „ 10. **Full-throated ease.** With its throat distended by its unrestrained singing.
- Lines 13-14. **Tasting of flora.....mirth.** With a reminiscent flavour, recalling thoughts of a spring-gladdened southern country (south of France or Spain where the wine was made) where rustics dance in groups and where may be heard the minstrel songs of old France and the merry laughter of sun-burnt peasants.
- Line 14. **Provencal.** From Provence (an old Roman province) in France, the home of the poetry of the Troubadours.
- „ 16. **Hippocrene.** 'Hippocrene is a stream of Helicon, the mountain sacred to the Muses. The name is given by the poet to the inspiring southern wine.
- „ 17. **Winking.** Note the word-picture.
- „ 23. **The fever and the fret.** A reminiscence of Shakespeare: "After life's fitful fever Duncan sleepeth well." (Macbeth).
- „ 25. **Where palsy shakes, etc.** Note the intensity of feeling in the lines that follow.

- Line 32. **Charioted by Bachus and his pards.** Bachus was the god of wine in classical mythology and was represented as riding in a chariot drawn by tigers.
- „ 35. **Already with thee.** The poet imagines himself wafted swiftly to the place where the nightingale is sitting. Then follows a description of the bird's leafy haunt, remarkable for its felicitous phrasing, its spontaneous melody and its keen realisation of the intimate life of Nature.
- „ 39. **What.....is with the breezes b'own.** What the breezes let in by blowing aside the leaves.
- „ 63. **The voice I hear.** The bird seems to him a type of all the nightingales that figured, or may have figured, in history or romantic legend.
- „ 66. **Ruth.** Read the story from the Bible. (*The Book of Ruth; Chapter ii*).
- „ 70. **Fairy land forlorn.** Note the beauty and romantic suggestiveness of Keats's adjectives: forest *dim*, fairy land *forlorn*.

TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG IN CITY PENT.

Contrast this poem with Mohan Ghose's *London*.

- Line 1. The first line is an echo of a line in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, IX, 445.
- „ 7. **Denbonair.** From a French word, meaning 'of good appearance'; hence, elegant.
- „ 8. **Love and languishment.** Love in a languorous mood.
- „ 10. **Philomel.** The nightingale who, according to the Greek story, was, in a former life, a maiden called Philomela.

WHEN I HAVE FEARS THAT I MAY CEASE TO BE.

The sonnet was written in January, 1818, three years before his death.

- Line 3. **High piled books in charactery.** The poet fondly pictures how his poetical works would look when printed. 'Charactery' is a fresh and pleasing word for (printed) characters.
- Lines 5-6. **Behold upon the night's starred face.....romance.** As he gazed on the night sky the old myths associated with the moon and the stars take shape in his mind.
- Line 8. **With the magic hand of chance.** A wonderful phrase for the "unpremeditated art" of the poet, the touch which comes as a gift.

Lines 11-12. **The faery power of unreflecting love.** The enchantment of first love when it is all a matter of dreams and fantasies.

Line 14. **Till love and fame.....do sink.** Till my dreams of love and fame appear mere dreams and vanish into nothingness.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI.

The tittle is taken from a French ballad and means "The fair lady without mercy." The melody and romantic suggestiveness of the title haunted the poet's imagination and produced the poem.

The poem pictures the effect of the fascination of woman when her heart is not given or rather, when she has no heart to give. It entralls the senses of the victim and slowly consumes him.

Lines 3-4. **The sedge has withered.....sing.** From these lines and from lines 7 and 8 we infer that it is winter.

Line 6. **So haggard and so woe-begone.** Here, and throughout the first three stanzas we see the wretched condition to which the Knight has been reduced. In the subsequent stanzas the Knight tells the cause of it

„ 37. **Pale Kings, etc.** Other victims of the Lady.

THOMAS HOOD (1799—1845).

Hood was brought up as an engraver, then took to editorial work. His poetry is simple but full of power especially when dealing with the sadder problems of life as in the *Bridge of Sighs* or in the famous *Song of the Shirt*. His manner is not sentimental a fact which gives dignity to his verse. He was also a popular humourist, but deep down in his nature was a vein of seriousness.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

The poem tells the story of an unfortunate girl in London who was driven to commit suicide by throwing herself into the river from London Bridge. Hood dwells for a moment on the social conditions which are responsible for such disasters.

Bridge of Sighs. See note on Byron's *Venice*. London Bridge is here so called because many unfortunate people must have stood sighing upon it before taking the last plunge.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING (1809—1861).

Elizabeth Barrett was of a sensitive and poetic temperament. Early in life she had an accident for which for many years she was confined to a darkened room where she read much and met a few people but was, of course, cut off from the busy world. There she was found by the poet Browning and a love grew up between them which to Elizabeth Barrett seemed hopeless, as we read in her famous *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. But the poet at last married her and carried her off to Italy where she improved and they lived happily in Florence. It is one of the most romantic love stories in the history of literature.

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

Pan was the Greek god of universal nature and was shaped like a man in the upper part of his body and like a goat in the lower part. The music-loving god wandered over mountains and forests and invented the syrinx or the shepherd's pipe. This is the germ out of which the charming poem grew. Note how the half-divine half-animal nature of Pan has been brought out. He is driven restlessly by the need of giving vent to the music that is in him till he plucks up the reed and makes the pipe and plays upon it strains of heavenly sweetness.

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON (1809—1890).

Tennyson was the accepted and representative poet of the Victorian era. He began to be known after 1830 and became Poet Laureate in 1850. Tennyson's distinctive quality as a poet lies in the perfect finish that he gave to his poetry even in minute details. The language of his poetry is vivid in its pictorial effects and harmonious in its rhythmic movement and melody. In other words he is an artist. On social and religious questions his poetry represents views which were held in his time but which do not appeal in the same way to the present generation. In some of his poems, however, as in the *Idylls of the King* he has dealt with questions which are of universal and perennial interest.

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

Not much is known of the historic Arthur except that he was a British king of the sixth century. But King Arthur is great in romantic legend as in the famous story of Sir Thomas Malory, called *Morte d'Arthur*, which Tennyson has mainly followed. In Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* we read how the kingdom that Arthur had built up crumbled away on account of the sins and infatuations of his court. His last battle was fought at Lyonesse in which the king was wounded and all his faithful knights perished except Sir Bedivere. The moment has now

come for his departure as Merlin the seer had prophesied. But according to the same prophecy he is to return after a time.

The parting words of Arthur are words of consolation and hope. The real value of all great work lies not so much in the external achievement as in the progressive spirit which it embodies. This progressive spirit is a part of divine purpose and will go on, carried forward by other great men sent by God. But the old order of things in which it was embodied must pass yielding place to new systems which will give more scope to it. Arthur is a type of such great men. In another aspect the story is an allegory of the soul (Arthur) temporarily vanquished by the senses (the rebel knights) and ultimately bound to conquer (Arthur's coming again).

Line 3. **King Arthur's Table.** The Knights of the famous Order of the Round Table.

„ 4. **Lyonesse.** Supposed to have been an extension of Land's End now submerged in the sea.

„ 6. **The bold Sir Bedivere.** 'Bold' is a permanent epithet for Sir Bedivere in imitation of the custom of Homer and of ballad poetry.

„ 9. **A broken chancel, etc.** A fitting background for the last scene of the King's life.

„ 12. **Water.** Lake.

„ 21. **Camelot.** King Arthur's capital; popularly identified with Queen's Camel a place in Somerset.

„ 31. **Samite.** A rich silk cloth, the name literally meaning woven of *six threads*.

Lines 48-49. **The sea-wind sang shrill, chill.** The sibilants make the line an echo of the sound of the bleak wind.

Line 60. **This way and that.....mind.** With a wavering mind; an expression imitated from Vergil, a favourite poet of Tennyson.

„ 80. **Lief.** Beloved, connected with Sanskrit *lubha*, to covet.

„ 94. **Obedience is the bond of rule.** Obedience on the part of the subject is necessary to keep the state together.

„ 105. **Nine years she wrought it.** Nine is supposed to be a number of mystical significance.

„ 110. **Conceit.** Notion. The word is now used in a degraded sense.

Lines 121-22. **Authbrity forgets.....eye.** Authority is as it were a faithless attendant who deserts a dying king. 'Widowed' is a vivid word for 'bereft.' A right royal speech.

Line 139. **A streamer of the northern morn.** A shooting ray of the Aurora Borealis, 'northern morn' being an English translation of the name.

- Lines 170 & 185. 'As in a picture', 'like a goad'. Are comparisons taken from classical poetry.
- Line 198. **Three Queens.** Supposed to represent Faith, Hope and Charity.
- Lines 215-16. **Drops of onset.** Drops of blood shed during the conflict.
- Line 221. **Like a shattered column.** Compare Scott's lines on the death of Pitt:
- Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon light is quenched in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill.
- „ 223. **From spur to plume a star of tournament.** Flashing light from his burnished armour as he charged across the arena.
- „ 231. **Every chance brought out a noble knight.** At every opportunity for adventure a knight offered his services and proved his knightly powers.
- „ 233. **The holy elders with the gift of myrrh.** The wise men from the East who brought gifts to the new-born Christ. (Bible, *Matthew II*, 11).
- „ 235. **Which was an image.....world.** Which seemed to represent the valour and nobility of the whole world. The round shape of the table was also symbolical.
- Lines 240-242. **The old order changeth.....world.** Arthur explains why there must be change in the external order of things.
- Line 254. **For so the whole round world, etc.** The metaphor is taken from Homer's story of the golden chain bound to the throne of Zeus at which all the gods pulled in the vain attempt to shake him. (*Iliad*, VIII, 19-30). In Tennyson the whole idea is different. Prayer is the holy bond between God and man and the precious means of man's salvation.
- „ 259. **Island-valley of Avilion.** A mythical Happy Island, which, as the legends tell us, became the abode of Arthur after his "passing". According to other accounts Avilion was a vale near Glastonbury in Somerset.
- Lines 260-261. **Where falls.....loudly.** Taken from Homer's accounts of Elysium (*Odyssey* IV, 566) and of Olympus (*Odyssey* VI, 42-45).
- Line 267. **Fluting a wild carol ere her death.** Referring to the poetic legend that the swan sings a sad song just before her death. There is a famous allusion to it in Shakespeare's *Othello* (V, 2, 247).

ULYSSES.

Ulysses was the wisest of the Greek heroes who took part in the expedition against Troy. His wanderings and adventures on his way home from Troy are narrated in Homer's *Odyssey*. But even after his return he could not rest but set out again on his last voyage. The story is founded on a passage in Dante's *Inferno* (Canto XXVI). Ulysses represents the spirit of noble and ceaseless effort. Contrast this with the spirit of his son Telemachus. The poem is full of Homeric echoes: "the rainy Hyades," "cities of men and mannets", "delight of battle", "windy Troy", "the dark broad seas", "sitting well in order smite the furrows", "the baths of the western stars."

Lines 19-21. **Yet all experience, etc.** These lines express the humility of a great mind. Three metaphors are used: (1) that of a vision of the bright sea through an arched passage; (2) that of sailing over the sea to an ever-widening horizon; (3) that of sailing towards a star that sinks below the horizon but becomes visible as the sailor moves further towards it.

ROBERT BROWNING (1812—1889).

Browning's father was an official in the Bank of England. The poet began to write in 1833, a little after Tennyson began, but it was a long time before he became a popular poet. In 1846 he married the poetess Elizabeth Barrett who was then an invalid and took her to Italy where they lived till 1861 when Mrs. Browning died. Browning's distinctive quality as a poet is the wide range of his imaginative sympathies and his dramatic power in presenting various aspects of human nature. He describes himself as a painter of the soul. The diction and metre of his poetry are sometimes too much strained by the fulness of thought and lose grace. But often the harshness or crabbedness is dramatic, that is, in accordance with the character of the speaker. His poetry is alive with passion. In all this he contrasts with his contemporary Tennyson.

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP.

In this dramatic fashion and in the briefest words possible Browning not only presents the situation but presents Napoleon's very self. The Emperor stands in a characteristic attitude, and the poet brings home to us his high ambition and his magnetic personality as a general.

Line 1. **Ratisbon.** A town in Bavaria, guarding the way to Vienna. It was necessary to Napoleon's ambitious scheme that Ratisbon should be captured. General Lannes attacked it with a French army and took it on April 3rd, 1809.

- Line 1. **We French.** The speaker probably was with the French army and, from the manner of his speech, a military officer.
- „ 5. **With neck out-thrust, etc.** A vivid picture of Napoleon.
- „ 8. **Mind.** Anxious thoughts.

MEETING AT NIGHT—PARTING AT MORNING.

These two are companion poems. The man returns home in the evening to his wife waiting for him. In the morning he must go out into the world to do his work.

- Line 15. **Path of Gold.** The sun's glowing pathway across the sky.

MULEYKEH.

The poem tells a story of an Arab's pride in his horse. Though he loves the animal more than anything else in the world he would rather lose it than let it be beaten in the race. The speaker is another Arab who tells the story.

- Lines 1-6. **If a stranger.....morn.** If a stranger called at the tent of Hoseyn, Hoseyn would say to him that he had neither bread nor salt to lay before him. If the stranger disbelieved him he would think Hoseyn was an inhospitable fellow; if he believed him he would pity Hoseyn's poverty. But one who knew would say that Hoseyn did not care for lesser things because he possessed the greatest prize of the world, his peerless horse Muleykeh.
- Line 10. **Never, since time began, etc.** The speaker imagines Hoseyn saying this as he addresses his horse.
- Lines 16-18. **Who started.....thrusts forth.** Muleykeh soon overtook and left behind the horse that ran ahead. The vanquished horses would be given nicknames and the last but one would be driven out of the paddock.
- „ 20-21. **But lavish both on Duhl.** Not Hoseyn but Duhl deserves pity for Duhl covets Muleykeh but cannot get it.
- Line 33. **You are open-hearted, etc.** Having failed to buy Muleykeh; Duhl now has come to ask it as a gift and flatters Hoseyn.
- „ 49. **What craft is it.** Duhl has now come to steal the horse. He had previously sent a spy to find out how Muleykeh was guarded.

THE LOST LEADER.

This spirited poem tells of a great leader of a party who, for worldly gain, deserted his followers and the noble ideals which he himself had taught them to cherish. The speaker is a member of the party. He is ashamed and indignant but still believes in his leader. He will be "pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne". One gathers the impression from the poem that the lost leader was a great poet. Browning admitted that in writing the poem he had thought of Wordsworth's desertion of his early liberal principles but that it was not a portrait. He had used Wordsworth only as a painter's model. Wordsworth in changing his principles had no mercenary motive.

Lines 13-14. **Snakespeare was of us.....were with us.** Shakespeare's broad humanity is reflected on all his dramas. Milton was a great champion of liberty and wrote magnificently in its support both in his sonnets and in his prose pamphlets. Burns's democratic sentiment is seen in his famous poem '*For a' that and a' that*'. Shelley's passion for freedom inspires all his poetry.

THE BOY AND THE ANGEL.

This beautiful story is told with a directness that is almost like that of the parables in the Bible. The first teaching of the poem is that God loves the simple and joyful worship of a humble heart. When Theocrite becomes Pope God misses his simple note of praise and the Archangel Gabriel leaves his great tasks in heaven, and takes the place of Theocrite, for "all service ranks the same with God." This is the second teaching of the poem.

Lines 19-20. **Night passed, day shone.....gone.** The time covers several years in the *human* story. The details are given in lines 53-60.

Line 40. **There is no doubt in it, no fear.** Compared with an Archangel's faith human faith is timid, but not the less dear to God on that account.

„ 68. **Creation's chorus.** The harmony of praise that rises from creation and of which the humble note of Theocrite's^c praise was an essential part.

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THE LABORATORY.

The poem is in the form of a dramatic monologue, the most vivid and concentrated form in which poetry can present at the same time story and character. Browning particularly excelled in this kind of poetry. The scene is a chemist's laboratory in France during the Ancient Regime. The speaker is a woman maddened

with jealousy who has 'come to buy poison to destroy her rival. She is watching in a glass mask while the poison is being prepared and gloats over the prospect of her revenge.

- Line 1. **Glass Mask.** To protect herself from the poisonous fumes.
 „ 5. Stress 'her' and the first 'know'.
 „ 7. Stress 'they', and 'me'.
 „ 8. Stress 'them' and 'here'.

PROSPICE.

The meaning of the title is "Look forward." The poem was written shortly after the death of the poet's wife to whom there is a touching allusion at the close. Note the dramatic vividness with which the poet tells of his passing from the warmth and brightness of life to the coldness and gloom of death. Compare this poem with Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar* (not given in this collection) and Walt Whitman's *Joy! Shipmate Joy!* Browning's attitude towards death is that of manly and robust courage; Tennyson's that of serene expectation; Walt Whitman's that of ecstatic joy.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1819—1861).

Clough was a scholar, connected with Oxford as a teacher and, for a time, connected with other educational work. His poetry, as the student will see from the poem selected here, is weighted, almost overweighted, with thought. He, like Matthew Arnold who wrote his elegy, lived at a time when the minds of thinking men were wavering between faith and doubt, when they were trying to struggle and reach out towards faith. Such a state of mind comes to all people at a time of transition from one order of things to another. The note of sincerity and earnestness in the poem which has been selected is of the greatest moral value.

SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NAUGHT AVAILETH.

- Lines 1-2. **Say not the struggle.....vain.** Do not lose heart at the seemingly small success of your best efforts and of the sufferings you have endured.
 Line 5. **Were dupes.** Proved deceptive.
Fears.....liars. Your apprehensions may prove in the end to have been groundless.
 Lines 6-8. **It may be.....field.** When many are working for the same cause, though some may have failed, others may succeed.

Lines 9-12. **While the tired waves.....main.** The metaphor is changed but the thought is the same as in the previous stanza.

„ 13-16. **And not by eastern windows..... bright.** However hard and slow your task may seem the cumulative effect of the efforts of many workers is cheering and hopeful when you look back upon it.

WALT WHITMAN (1819—1892).

Walt Whitman, the famous American poet, was the son of a wood-cutter and carpenter. He himself was by turns carpenter, printer, schoolmaster and journalist. In 1863 when America entered upon the civil war Whitman went out to nurse the wounded. Thus he passed through a variety of experience. He began to write poetry about 1856. Whitman's poetry, like Browning's is in intimate touch with life, though, unlike Browning, he has no philosophy. It is fearlessly unconventional and instinct with an elemental force. Whitman was the great poet of American democracy.

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

The occasion of this poem was the death of Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) President of the United States of America and one of the noblest figures in American history. He conducted with wonderful tact and wisdom the Civil War which broke out in America over the question of emancipating the slaves, Lincoln being on the side of emancipation. In 1864 he was re-elected President and in April 1865 successfully concluded the war. But in the same month he was assassinated while attending a performance at the Ford theatre.

JOY! SHIPMATE—JOY!

Joy! Shipmate—Joy! See notes on Browning's *Prospice*.

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822—1888).

Matthew Arnold was son of Dr. Arnold, the famous Headmaster of Rugby. He was an official in the Education Department and a famous literary critic, besides being a poet. He brought out his first book of poetry in 1849. His great quality as a poet is lucidity, the power of presenting his thoughts in bright and clear outline, the result of his Greek studies. His poetry has a melancholy note as if, like Clough, he felt deeply the spiritual struggles and perplexities of the time in which he lived.

SOHRAB AND RUSTUM.

The subject has been taken from the *Shah Namah* of Firdousi, a famous Persian poet of the tenth century. The *Shah Namah*

is an epic that tells of the deeds of the heroes who made Persia famous. The greatest of these heroes was Rustum. Out of the legends about Rustum, Matthew Arnold has selected here the most pathetic that tells how Rustum the champion of Persia by a terrible mistake killed his son Sohrab in single combat on the western banks of the Oxus. Rustum did not know that a son had been born to him and that the heroic Sohrab was that son. Nor had Sohrab seen his great father though he had heard much of him. In the earlier part of the poem (not included here) we are told how Sohrab wanders in quest of Rustum, how he leads a Tartar army against Persia only to induce Rustum to come out; how, when the two armies meet, Sohrab proposes that they should select champions to fight in single combat; how he himself is selected the champion of the Tartars; and how the Persians persuade Rustum to fight as their champion, *but not under his own name*. Thus father and son meet in combat without knowing each other.

Line 48. **Afrasiab.** The Tartar King and the sworn foe of Persia.

„ 55. **Autumn star.** The bright star, Sirius, in the constellation of the Dog, rises in summer and, therefore, can hardly be called an autumn star. It was supposed to cause fevers.

„ 61. **Curld minion.** 'Curled' is from Shakespeare ('curled darlings'—*Othello*) 'minion' means 'a favourite'. Both words are used with a touch of contempt.

„ 159. **As when some hunter, etc.** Note how the simile has been developed beyond the points of comparison. The poet takes the opportunity of presenting a complete picture. Such similes belong to epic poetry and are found in Homer and Milton.

„ 282. **The griffin.....Zal.** Zal belonged to the royal house of Seistan. He was called 'Zal' or aged because he was born with white hair. This was regarded as an evil omen and he was abandoned on a mountain where he was brought up by a griffin (a fabulous animal with a lion's body and an eagle's head and wings). He was afterwards found and became famous.

„ 464. **Jemshid in Persepolis.** Persepolis was an ancient Persian capital and the byrial place of Persian Kings. Jemshid is said to have built a famous palace here with the help of demons.

APOLLO, LEADER OF THE MUSES.

In these words of consummate beauty and purest melody the poet gives us a momentary vision of Apollo, the Greek god of poetry and the leader of the Muses. The singer stands singing on the slopes of heaving Etna. As he dreams of the serene beauty

of the moonlit springs of Mount Helicon, the abode of the god, he sees a vision of Apollo coming with the Muses to bathe in the springs. Their divinely fair forms, their fragrant locks and the holy calm that breathes through their singing as they depart, are all brought home to us.

Lines 45-48. **The day.....calm.** They sang of man's life on earth with its fits of excitement followed by rest and peace; of the struggle for the prize and of the eternal silences around.

CONVENTRY PATMORE (1823—1896).

Coventry Patmore was not exclusively a poet but he has left some good poetry. He began to write about 1840. The touch of mysticism which we find in his poetry is seen in the poem selected here.

THE TOYS.

The poem expresses feelingly a father's remorse for rebuking his motherless child and the child's suppressed and helpless grief. The father feels that he too has been an offender in God's eyes and given to vanities. Perhaps God will forgive him when he is dead even as he has forgiven his sleeping child.

GEORGE MEREDITH (1828—1909).

George Meredith, like Browning, was late in winning general recognition. He was mainly a novelist but wrote poetry also in which he gave evidence of powers of imagination. His first book of poetry was published in 1851.

LUCIFER IN STARLIGHT.

Satan's first revolt against God and the punishment which followed it are related in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Meredith represents Satan as contemplating a second revolt but desisting from it awestruck by the serenity and order of the starry world which indicate the unalterable law of God which it obeys. It is a great thought greatly imagined.

Line 7. **Careened.** Leaned on one side like a great ship. A nautical term.

„ 9. **Scars.** The marks of God's thunderbolt hurled at him during his first rebellion.

„ 12. **Which are the brain of heaven.** The starry world, ruled by law shows that there is a sleepless Mind at work in the universe.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837—1909).

Swinburne, like Shelley, came from a family which had aristocratic connections. He was educated at Eton and Oxford and published his first volume of poetry in 1860. He came into vogue when the public of England were growing somewhat weary of the mild sentiment of Tennyson. His poetry, as the student will find from the poem selected, has a rapid and melodious flow.

A CHILD'S LAUGHTER.

The poem sounds almost like the gurgle of a child's laughter. The melody is sustained with wonderful power.

- Line 8. **At sundawn stirred.** The rustle of woods sounds sweeter in the early morning on account of the general silence.
- „ 9. **Winsome word.** Musical babble.
- „ 10. **Wind.....weather.** The freshness that the wind brings in such weather adds sweetness to its sound.
- „ 15. **Hoped in heaven hereafter.** The ring of innocence in the child's laughter on earth is lost with age and with knowledge of the world but may be recovered when the soul is purified in heaven.
- „ 17. **Very sound of very light.** A sound that matches in beauty the light in which it is heard.
- „ 23. **Bold.** Clear.
- „ 26. **Wren.** "The smallest of birds."

MONMOHAN GHOSE (1869—1924).

Monmohan Ghose's English poetry was accepted by his contemporaries in England. He was sent to England when quite young and received a good English education; being at St. Pauls and then at Oxford. Both at school and at college Greek literature had a strong attraction for him. He found himself among a small group of sympathetic and appreciative English friends, and their companionship was good for his sensitive temperament. In 1890 came out a little volume of poetry to which Monmohan Ghose contributed along with Stephen Phillips, Arthur Cripps and Laurence Binyon. This was his first venture. In 1894 he started for home. Returning to India he entered the service of Government in the Education Department and retired as a reputed Professor of English at Presidency College, Calcutta. As a teacher he made a deep impression upon his students. As a poet Monmohan Ghose is more English than Indian in his modes of thinking. "No Indian," says Mr. Laurence Binyon, "has ever before used our tongue with so poetic a touch... To us he is a voice among the great company of English singers."

LONDON.

Coming to London from the country the poet shakes off the spell of the quiet countryside and opens his heart fully to the strong appeal of the city's rushing life.

- Line 10. **Of self so weary.** Tired of brooding on itself.
 „ 11. **Be lost.** Forget itself.
 Bathed.....voices. Refreshed by giving itself up to the appeal that lies in man's talk.
 „ 17. **Passionate charm.** The interest that arises from the soul's expression in the face.
 „ 20. **Sings.** Rustles.
 „ 24. **Twine in the roots of things.** Find myself in close touch with the very things out of which man's life in the world grows.

SIR WILLIAM WATSON.

Sir William Watson is a modern poet and much of modern thinking is reflected in his work. His earlier work was written under the influence of the romantic school but gradually his intellectual quality predominated and sometimes his thought over-weighted his poetry. His rhythmic charm is seen in the poem here selected.

SWEETEST SWEETS THAT TIME HAS RIFLED.

This melodious song, as the poet himself tells us, is written in an archaic manner, somewhat in the manner of the seventeenth century English poets.

- Line 1. **Sweetest.....rifled.** The charms of the fairest women of history now destroyed by time.
 „ 2. **Live anew.....tongue.** Have been immortalized in song.
 „ 6. **Golden puissance.** Fascinating lustre.
 „ 7. **Envious loam.** The grave which could not bear as it were that they should be so beautiful.
 „ 12. **Vain the aspic.** Cleopatra is said to have killed herself by applying an asp to her bosom. Read the scene in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.
 Vain the cord. Helen of Troy is said to have met her death by being tied with a cord and strangled.

RUPERT BROOKE (1887—1915).

Rupert Brooke was the most promising of the poets of the present generation, that is, of the time of King George V. He was educated at Rugby and at Cambridge. He published his first volume of poems in 1911. He enlisted for the War in 1914 and died of blood-poisoning the next year. The poem here selected is marked by the fervent patriotism evoked by the Great War and is also marked by the youthful qualities of freshness and ardour. It has been well said that Rupert Brooke's short life is a more beautiful poem than any he wrote.

Line 2. **Some corner of a foreign field.** Rupert Brooke died on board a hospital ship and was buried in the island of Imbros which is in the Aegean Sea and belongs to Turkey.

„ 3. **That is for ever England.** Being the resting place of an Englishman and therefore dear as home.

„ 9. **All evil shed away.** Purified by death.

Lines 10-11. **A pulse.....given.** Even though absorbed in the infinite, will not altogether lose its individuality and all that England taught it.

SAROJINI NAIDU.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's name is well-known in India. She comes from a talented family of Bengali Brahmins settled in Hyderabad, Deccan. By her extreme sensibility and exquisite lyric gift she was marked out for a poet. Her command over the English language is wonderful.

IN THE BAZARS OF HYDERABAD

This poem is one of two which she calls "Songs of my City." Her city is Hyderabad. As we read the poem the magic of the East envelops us. The vivid scenes of an eastern bazar pass before our eyes.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

Rabindranath Tagore, born in 1861, is reckoned as one of the world-poets to-day. He came to be known in the West after he won the Nobel prize, in 1913, on his own prose translations of his mystical religious poems, *Gitanjali*. The book was considered as "the greatest work of an ideal tendency." His lyric genius, which found expression when he was a mere boy, is not less remarkable than Shelley's. Though first and foremost he is a lyric poet, yet he has also attained pre-eminence as a writer of short stories and as an educationalist of original ideas. He has

travelled widely and has captured the imagination of the world by his magnetic personality. He has carried far and wide the message of India, the message of reaching out to a broad humanity by cultivating a cosmopolitan spirit in culture. This was the spirit in which, he thinks, the great Buddhist Universities of India worked and this is the spirit which distinguishes the poet's own university, the *Visva-bharati* of Bolpur. The two poems included here were, of course, written in Bengali. The translations are by one of the editors.

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